

THE ARGOSY.

DECEMBER 2, 1872.

WITHIN THE MAZE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

NEWS FOR MR. TATTON.

WHAT Mr. Detective Tatton's future proceedings would have been, had his stay at Foxwood been prolonged, cannot here be known. Social matters had resumed their ordinary groove. The Maze was left undisturbed; Mr. Cattacomb was well again; St. Jerome's in full force.

One morning when Mr. Tatton's hopes and plans were, like Cardinal Wolsey's greatness, all a-ripening, he received a communication from Mr. Superintendent Game at Scotland Yard, conveying the astounding intelligence that the real Philip Salter had not been in Foxwood at all, but had just died in Canada.

Mr. Tatton sat contemplating the letter. He could not have been much more astonished had a bombshell burst under him. Of the truth of the information there could be no question: its reliability was indisputable. One of the chief officers in the home police force, who was in Canada on business, and had known Salter well, discovered him in the last stage of a wasting sickness, and saw him die.

"I've never had such a fool's game to play at as *this*," ejaculated Mr. Tatton when sufficiently recovered to speak; "and never wish to have such another. What the deuce, then, is the mystery connected with the Maze?"

Whatever it might be, it was now no business of his; though could he have afforded to waste more time and money, he would have liked very well to stay and track it out. Summoning the Widow Jinks, he informed her that he was called away suddenly on particular business; and then proceeded to pack up.

On his way to the station he chanced to meet Sir Karl Andinnian : and the latter's heart went up with a great bound. The black bag in Mr. Tatton's hand, and the portmanteau being wheeled along beside him, spoke a whole volume of hope.

"Good morning, Sir Karl. You have misled us finely as to the Maze."

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Tatton?" asked Karl.

"Salter has turned up in Canada. Or, one might perhaps rather say, turned down; for he is dead, poor fellow."

"Indeed!"

"Indeed and in truth. One of our officers is over there, and was with him when he died. It was too bad of you to mislead us in this way, Sir Karl."

"Nay, you misled yourselves."

"A fine quantity of time I have wasted down here! weeks upon weeks; and all for nothing. I never was so vexed in my life."

"You have yourself to blame—or those who sent you here. Certainly not me. The very first time I had the honour of speaking to you, Mr. Tatton, I assured you on the word of a gentleman that Salter was not at Foxwood."

"Well, come, Sir Karl—what is the secret being enacted within the place over yonder?" pointing his finger in the direction of the Maze.

"I am not in the habit of inquiring into the private affairs of my tenants," was the rather haughty answer. "If there be any secret at the Maze—though I think no one has assumed it but yourself—you may rely upon it that it is not in any way connected with Salter. Are you taking your final departure?"

"It looks like it, Sir Karl"—nodding towards the luggage going onwards. "When the game's at the other end of the world, and dead besides, it is not of much use my staying to search after it in this. I hope the next I have to hunt will bring in more satisfaction."

They said farewell cordially. The detective in his natural sociability; Karl in his most abundant gratitude for the relief it would give his brother. And Mr. Detective Tatton, hastening on in the wake of the portmanteau, took the passing up-train, and was whirled away to London.

A minute or two afterwards Karl met his agent. He was beginning to impart to him the tidings about Salter, when Smith interrupted him.

"I have heard it, Sir Karl. I got a letter from a relative this morning, which told me all. As to poor Salter, the release is probably a happy one. He is better off than he ever could have been again in this world. But what on earth put Scotland Yard on the false scent that he was at Foxwood, will always be a problem to me. Sir Adam is, in one sense, free again. There will be less danger in his getting away from Foxwood now, if it be judged desirable that he should go."

Karl shook his head. There was another impediment now to his getting away—grievous sickness.

That Sir Adam Andinnian had some very grave disorder upon him, could no longer be doubtful to himself or to those about him. It seemed to develop itself more surely day by day. Adam took it as calmly as he did other evils; but Karl was nearly out of his mind with distress at the complication it brought. Most necessary was it for Adam to have a doctor; to be attended by one; and yet they dare not put the need in practice. The calling in of Dr. Cavendish had entailed only too much danger and terror.

The little baby, Charles Andinnian, was lying at rest in Foxwood church-yard, within the precincts consecrated to the Andinnian family. Ann Hopley chose the grave, and had a fight over it with the clerk. That functionary protested he would not allot it to any baby in the world. She might choose any spot except that, but that belonged to the Foxwood Court people exclusively. Sir Karl settled the dispute. Appealed to by the clerk, he gave a ready and courteous permission: and the child was laid there. Ann Hopley then paid a visit to the stone-mason, and ordered a little white marble stone, nothing to be inscribed on it but the initials "C. A." and the date of the death. Poor Rose had only her sick husband to attend to now.

He was not always sick. There were days when he seemed to be as well, and almost as active, as ever; and, upon that, would supervene a season of pain, and dread, and danger.

One afternoon, when Karl was driving his wife by in the pony-chaise, Ann Hopley had the gate open, and was standing at it. It was the day following the departure of Mr. Tatton. Something in the woman's face—a kind of mute, appealing anguish—struck Karl forcibly as she looked at him. In the sensation of freedom and of safety brought by the detective's absence, Karl actually pulled up.

"Will you pardon me, Lucy, if I leave you for one moment? I think Ann Hopley wants to speak to me."

He leaped out of the little low chaise, leaving the reins to Lucy. Her face was turning scarlet. Of all the insults he had thrust upon her, this seemed the greatest. To pull up at that very gate when *she* was in the carriage! Mr. Smith and his churchwarden-pipe were enjoying themselves as usual at Clematis Cottage, looking out on the world in general, and no doubt (as Lucy indignantly felt) making his private comments.

"He is very ill again, sir," were the few whispered words of Ann Hopley. "Can you come in? I am not sure but it will be for death."

"Almost immediately," returned Karl; and he stepped back to the chaise just in time. Lucy was about to try her hand at driving, to make her escape from him and the miserable situation.

Since the night of the baby's death, Karl and his wife had lived a more estranged life than ever. Lucy's eminently ungracious manner as he took his seat again would have stopped his speaking, even if he had had a mind to speak; but he was deep in anxious

thought. The resentful way in which she had from the first taken up the affair of his unfortunate brother, served to tie his tongue always. He drove in, stood to help her out—or would have helped, but that she swept by without touching him—left the pony to the waiting groom, and walked back to the Maze.

Adam was in one of his attacks of pain; nay of agony. It could be called nothing less. It was not, however, for death; the sharpness of the paroxysm, with its attendant signs, had misled Ann Hopley. Rose looked scarcely less ill than her husband. Her most grievous position was telling upon her. Her little child dead, her husband apparently dying, danger and dread of another sort on all sides. More like a shadow was she now than a living woman.

"Do you know what I have been thinking, Rose?" said Karl, when his brother had revived. "That we might trust Moore. You hear, Adam. I think he might be trusted."

"Trusted for what?" returned Adam; not in his sometimes fierce voice, but in one very weak and faint, as he lay on the sofa.

"To see you; to hear who you are. I cannot help believing that he would be true as steel. Moore is one of those men, as it seems to me, that we might trust our lives with."

"It won't do to run risks, old fellow. I do not want to be captured in my last hours."

Karl believed there would be no risk. Mr. Moore was a truly good man, sensible and benevolent. The more he dwelt on the idea, the surer grew his conviction that the surgeon might be trusted. Rose, who was almost passive in her distress, confessed she liked him. Both he and his sister gave her the impression of being, as Karl worded it, true as steel.

"Not that it much signifies either way," cried Sir Adam, his careless manner reviving as his strength and spirits returned. "Die I soon must, I suppose, now; but I'd rather die in my bed here than on a pallet in a cell. So, Karlo, old friend, if you like to see what Moore's made of, do so."

"I wish it had occurred to me before," cried Karl. "But indeed, the outer dangers have been so imminent as to drive other fears away."

"It will never matter, *bon frère*. I don't suppose all the advice in the kingdom could have saved me. What is to be will be."

"Master," put in Ann Hopley, "where's the good of your taking up a gloomy view of it, all at once? *That's* not the way to get well."

"Gloomy! not a bit of it," cried Sir Adam, in a voice as cheery as a lark's on a summer's morning. "Heaven is more to be desired than Portland Prison, Ann."

So Karl went forth, carrying his commission. In his heart he still trembled at it. The interests involved were so immense; the stake was so heavy for his unfortunate brother. In his extreme caution, he

did not care to be seen going to the surgeon's house, but sent a note to ask him to call at the Court.

It was evening when Mr. Moore arrived. He was shown into Sir Karl's room. Giles was appearing with two wax-lights in massive silver candlesticks, but his master motioned them away.

"I can say what I have to say better by this light than in a glare," he observed to the doctor: perhaps as an opening preliminary of intimation that the subject of the interview was not a pleasant one. And Giles shut them in alone. Karl sat sideways to the table, his elbow leaning on it; the doctor facing him with his back to the window.

"Mr. Moore," began Karl, after a pause of embarrassment, "did it ever occur to you to have a secret confided to your keeping involving life or death?"

Mr. Moore paused in his turn. The question no doubt caused him surprise. He took it—the "life or death"—to be put in a professional point of view. A suspicion came over him that he was about to be consulted for some malady connected with the (evident) fading away of Lady Andinnian.

"I do not suppose, Sir Karl, there is a single disease that flesh is heir to, whether secret or open, but what I have been consulted upon in my time."

"Not disease," returned Karl hastily, finding he was misunderstood. "I meant a real, actual secret. A dangerous secret, involving life or death to the individual concerned, according as others should hold it sacred or betray it."

A longer pause yet. Mr. Moore sat staring at Karl through the room's twilight.

"You must speak more plainly, Sir Karl, if you wish me to understand." And Karl continued thoughtfully, weighing every word as he spoke it, that it might not harm his brother.

"The case is this, Mr. Moore. I hold in my keeping a dangerous secret. It concerns a—a friend: a gentleman who has managed to put himself in peril of the law. For the present he is evading the law; keeping himself, in fact, concealed alike from enemies and friends, with the exception of one or two who are—I may say—helping to screen him. If there were a necessity for my wishing to confide this secret to you, would you undertake to keep it sacred? Or should you consider it lay in your duty, as a conscientious man, to betray it?"

"Goodness bless me, no!" cried the doctor. "I'm not going to betray people: it's not in my line. My business is to heal their sickness. It is a case of debt, I suppose, Sir Karl?"

Karl looked at him for a moment steadily. "And if it were not a case of debt, but of crime, Moore? What then?"

"Just the same. Betraying my fellow-men, whether smarting under the ban of perplexity or of sin, does not lie in my duty, I say. I am not a detective officer. By the way, perhaps that other detective—who

turns out to be named Tatton, and to belong to Scotland Yard—may have been down here looking after the very man."

Mr. Moore spoke lightly. Not a suspicion rested upon him that the sad and worn gentleman before him held any solemn or personal interest in this. Karl resumed, his voice taking a lower tone.

"An individual is lying in concealment, as I have described. His offence was not against you or against me. Therefore, as you observe, and as I judge, it does not lie even in our duty to denounce him. I am helping to screen him. I want you to undertake to do the same when you shall know who he is."

"I'll undertake it with all my heart, Sir Karl. You have some motive for confiding the matter to me?"

"The motive arises out of necessity. He is grievously ill; in urgent need of medical care. I fear his days are already numbered: and in that fact lies a greater obligation for us to obey the dictates of humanity."

"I see. You want me to visit him, and do what I can for him. I am ready and willing."

"He is—mind, I shall shock you—a convicted felon."

"Well?—he has a body to be tended and a soul to be saved," replied the surgeon, curiously impressed with the hush of gravity that had stolen over the interview. "I will do my best for him, Sir Karl."

"And guard his secret?"

"I will. Here's my hand upon it. What would my Maker say to my offences at the Last Day, I wonder, if I could usurp His functions here, and deliver up to vengeance my fellow-man?"

"I may trust you, then?"

"You may. I perceive you are over-anxious Sir Karl. What more assurance can I give you? You may trust me as you trust yourself. By no incautious word of mine shall his peril be increased, or harm come nigh him: nay, I will avert it from him if I can. And now—who is he? The sick man at the Maze—to whom Dr. Cavendish was called? Taking one thing with another, the Maze has been a bit of a puzzle in my mind lately."

"The same."

"Ay. Between ourselves, I was as sure as gold that some one was here. Is it Mr. Grey?—the poor young lady's husband; the dead baby's father?"

"Just so. But he is not Mr. Grey."

"Who is he, then?"

Karl glanced around him, as though he feared the very walls might contain eaves-droppers. Mr. Moore saw his dread.

"It is a most dangerous secret," whispered Karl with agitation.

"You will keep it with your whole heart and life?"

"Once more, I will. I will. You cannot doubt me. Who is it?"

"My brother. Sir Adam Andinnian."

The doctor leaped to his feet. Perhaps he had a doubt of Karl's sanity. He himself had assisted to lay Sir Adam in his grave.

"Hush !" said Karl. "No noise. It is indeed my most unfortunate brother."

"Did he come to life again?—Did Sir Adam come to life again?" reiterated the wondering surgeon in his perplexity.

"He did not die."

They went together to the Maze after dark, Karl letting the doctor in with his own key. The whole history had been revealed to him. Nothing was kept back, save a small matter or two connected with the means of Sir Adam's daily concealment: of those no living soul without the Maze was cognisant, save three: Karl, Hewitt, and Smith the agent. Mr. Moore was entrusted with it later, but not at first. During the lifetime of a medical man, it falls to his lot to hear some curious family secrets, as it had fallen to Mr. Moore; but he had never met with one half so strange and romantic as this.

Sir Adam had dismissed the signs of his illness, and—it will hardly be credited—attired himself in his black evening dress. With the departure of Mr. Tatton, old habits resumed their sway with all their surrounding incaution. Mr. Moore saw the same tall, fine man, with the white and even teeth, that he had caught the transient glimpse of in the uncertain twilight some weeks before. The same, but with a difference: for the face was shrunken now to little more than half the size it had been then. In the past week or two he had changed rapidly. He met them when they entered—it was in the upstairs sitting-room: standing at the door erect, his head thrown back. Mr. Moore put out his hand; but the other did not take it.

"Do you know all, sir?" he asked.

"All, Sir Adam."

"And you are not my enemy?"

"Your true friend, Sir Adam. Never a truer one shall be about you than I."

Their hands met then. "But I am not Sir Adam here, you know; I am Mr. Grey. Ah, doctor, what a life it has been!"

"A life that has done its best to kill him," thought the doctor, as he sat down. "Why did you not call me in before?" he asked.

"Well, we were afraid. You would be afraid of everybody if you were in my place and position. Besides, this disease, whatever it may turn out to be, has developed itself so rapidly that but little time seems to have been lost. I do not see how you will come in now, if it is to be a daily visit, without exciting the curiosity of the neighbourhood."

"Oh, nonsense," said the surgeon. "Mrs. Grey has a renewal of illness and I come in to see her, the curious neighbours will understand, if they are exacting upon the point. Or old Hopley, your gardener.—I'm sure his rheumatism must need a doctor sometimes."

Sir Adam laughed. "Hopley will do best," he said. "And then you know, doctor, if—if the worst comes to the worst; that is, the worst so far as sickness is concerned, I can be carried out as Hopley."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AT THE RED DAWN.

THE time passed on : Sir Adam fluctuating, some days fearfully ill, some days feeling well and hearty.

Karl went across to the Maze one morning soon after breakfast. His brother had been very ill indeed the evening before : so ill that Karl had brought most unpleasant thoughts away with him. He was ringing at the gate when it suddenly opened : Ann Hopley was letting Mr. Moore out.

So far as *his* visits went, there had been no trouble. Foxwood had taken care to inform itself as to what patient at the Maze it was that Mr. Moore was again in regular attendance upon, and found it to be Hopley the gardener. The old man had caught an attack of rheumatic fever, or some other affection connected with age and knee joints—said the Misses Moore to the rest of the fair flock going to and from St. Jerome's. In the doctor's day-book the patient was entered as "James Hopley, Mrs. Grey's servant." The doctor's assistant, a fashionable young man from London, who wore an eye-glass in his eye, could have the pleasure of reading it ten times a day if he chose.

"How is he?" asked Karl of Mr. Moore.

"Oh, better this morning—as I expected he would be," was the surgeon's answer. "But I have ordered him to lie in bed for the day. This time I think he will obey me, for he feels uncommonly weak. I don't half like the responsibility that lies on me. I wish he could be in London under the constant care of one of its practised men."

"We wish this, and wish the other, Mr. Moore," said Karl, sadly, "and you know how impossible it is for us to do more than we are doing. Answer me truly—for I think you can answer. Would there be a fair chance of his recovery if we had other advice than yours? Would there be any better chance of it?"

"Honestly speaking, I do not think there would. I believe I am doing for him all that can be done."

Ann Hopley drew the gate open again, and the doctor went out. Karl passed on through the labyrinth.

Sir Adam liked to use his own will in all respects, and it was the first time he had made even a semblance of obeying Mr. Moore's orders of taking rest by daytime. He looked very ill. The once handsome face seemed shrunk to nothing ; the short hair was getting to look almost white ; the grey-blue eyes, beautiful as Karl's, had a strangely wistful, patient look in them.

"I thought you would be here, Karlo. I have wanted you ever since daylight."

"Are you feeling better, Adam? Free from pain?"

"Much better. Quite free from it."

"Moore has been saying he wishes we could get you to London, that you might have more skilled advice."

"What nonsense!" cried Adam. "As if any advice could really avail me! He knows it would not. Did it avail my father, Karl?"

Karl remained silent. There was no answer he could make.

"Sit down, old fellow, and tell me all the news. Got a paper with you?"

"The papers have not come yet," replied Karl, as he drew a chair to the bedside.

"Slow coaches, people are in this world! I shall get up presently."

"No, Adam, not to-day. Moore says you must not."

"Good old man! he is slow too. But he won't keep me in bed, Karl, when I choose to quit it. I am the best judge of my own strength. If I lay here for a month of Sundays, Karl, it would not add a day to my life. What's the old adage, Karlo?—'a short life and a merry one!' Mine has not been very merry of late, has it?"

"I wish we could get you well, Adam."

"Do you? We are told, you know, that all things as they fall are for the best. The world would say, I expect, that this is. I wonder sometimes, though, how soon or how late the enemy would have shown itself, had my life continued smooth as yours is."

Smooth as yours is! The unconscious words brought a pang to Karl's heart; they sounded so like mockery. Heaven alone knew the distress and turbulence of his.

"I got Moore into a cosy chat the other day," resumed Sir Adam: "the wife was safe away, trimming the plants in the greenhouse—Rose is nearly as good a gardener as I am, Karl."

"I know she is fond of gardening."

"Ay, and has been amidst it for years, you see. Well—I led Moore on, saying this, and asking the other, and he opened his mind a bit. The disease was in me always, he thinks, Karl, and must have come out, sooner or later. It was only a question of time. I have said so myself of late. But I did not look to follow the little olive branch quite so quickly. Shall you put on mourning for me, old fellow? It will be a risk, won't it? I shan't care to be held up to the world as Adam Andinnian, dead, any more than I do alive. You'll not care to say, either, 'This black coat is worn for that brother of mine: the mauvais sujet who set the world all agog with his scandal.'"

What kind of a mood was Sir Adam in this morning? Karl's grave eyes questioned it. One of real, light, careless mockery?—or was it an underlying current of sadness and regret making itself too uneasily felt in his heart?

"Don't, Adam. It jars on every chord and pulse. You and I have cause to be at least more sober than other men."

"What have I said?" cried Sir Adam, half laughing. "That you may have to put on mourning for me. It is in the nature of things that the elder should go before the younger: we'd not be so wanting in good manners as to stay to go last. You look well in black, too, Karl; men with such faces as yours always do."

"I hope it will be a long while before I have to wear it," sighed Karl. "Adam, is it right to speak in this way?"

"Is it particularly wrong?"

"Why do you do it?"

"Need of change, I suppose. I have had a solemn night of it, old fellow: and I hardly know yet whether I was asleep or awake. It was somewhat of both, I expect: but I thought I was amidst the angels. I can see them now as they looked; a whole crowd of them gathered about my bed. And, Karlo, when a man begins to dream of angels, and not to be able to decide afterwards whether it be a dream or a shadowed reality, it is a pretty sure sign, I take it, that no great space of time will elapse before he is with them."

Adam talked himself into a doze. With his worn and haggard face turned to the wall, he slept as peacefully as a child. Karl stole away, and went into the greenhouse. Rose was there amid the plants; the sunlight, shining on her beautiful hair, turned it into threads of gold. She lifted her white face, with its sad expression.

"I knew you were with him, Karl, so I did not come in. Don't you think he looks very, very ill this morning?"

"Yes, he certainly does. He is asleep now. He had a bad night, I fancy."

"Do you think there's hope, Karl?" she piteously asked—almost as if all hope had left herself.

"I don't know, Rose. Mr. Moore has not told me there is none."

"Perhaps it is that he will not say," she rejoined, resting her elbow on the green steps amid the plants, and her cheek on her hand. "I seem to see it, Karl; to see what is coming. Indeed, you might tell me the truth. I shall not feel it quite so much as I should had our circumstances been happier."

"I have told you as far as I know, Rose."

"There's my little baby gone: there's my husband going: all my treasures will be in the better world. I shall have nothing to do but live on for, and look forward to, the time when I may go to them. Six months ago, Karl, had I known Adam must die, I think the grief

would have killed me. But the apprehension we have undergone the last few weeks—Adam's dread, and my awful fear for him—has gone a great way to reconcile me. I see—and I think he sees—that Death would not be the worst calamity. Better for him to be at rest than live on in that frightful peril night and day; each moment as it passes one of living agony, lest the next should bring the warders of Portland Island to retake him. No wonder it is wearing him out."

Winter approached. Mrs. Cleeve was in London and Lucy had joined her there, leaving Miss Blake to keep house at the Court. Some ladies, fearing the world's chatter, might have objected to remain with so young and attractive a man as Sir Karl Andinnian; Miss Blake was a vast deal too strong-minded for any thought of the kind.

There had been a frost in the night, but the glorious morning sun had chased its signs away. At mid-day it was shining hotly; and Karl was almost glad of the thin screen of leaves left in the labyrinth as he made his way through it. Some days had passed now since Adam had had any sharp amount of illness: he was wasting away rapidly, and that was the worst outward sign. But his will in these intervals of ease was indomitable, imparting to him a fictitious strength.

As Karl came in view of the lawn, he saw Rose standing by one of the distant beds, talking to Hopley. The old man was digging; and had bent himself nearly double over his work. Karl crossed over, a reprimand on his lips.

"Adam, you should not. You promised me you would not again take a spade or other gardening implement in your hand. Your strength is not equal to it, and it must do you harm."

"Just hark at him, Rose. It would not be Karlo if he did not find fault with me. What shall you do for somebody to croak at, brother mine, when I am gone?"

Was it Hopley who spoke?—or was it Sir Adam? The falling-in mouth and the speech, the crooked back, the tottering and swelling knees, the smock-frock and the red comforter and the broad straw hat, all were Hopley's. But the manner of speech and the eyes too, now you came to see them as he looked up at Karl, were Sir Adam's.

Yes. They were one and the same. Poor old Hopley the gardener was but Sir Adam in disguise. With the padded knees and false hump he had managed to deceive the world, including Mr. Detective Tatton. He might not, perhaps, have so surely deceived Mr. Tatton had the latter been looking after Sir Adam Andinnian and been acquainted with his person. But the decrepid gardener bore no resemblance to Philip Salter: and, that fact ascertained, it was all that concerned Mr. Tatton.

It may be remembered that when Mrs. Andinnian was staying at Weymouth, she and her servant, Ann Hopley, were in secret communication with one of the warders of Portland Prison. In point of

fact, they were negotiating with him the possibilities of Sir Adam's escape. This man was James Hopley; a warder—as Karl had taken him to be, and also Ann's husband. In the scuffle that took place the night of the escape, the man really killed was the other prisoner, Cole: and it was he who was taken to Foxwood, and lay buried in its churchyard. Hopley was drowned.

At that period, and for some little time before it, Philip Smith was at Portland Prison. Not as a prisoner: the man had never in his life done aught to merit incarceration: but he was seeking employment there, through the interest of one of the chief warders, who was a friend of his—a man named O'Brian. From the date of the frauds of Philip Salter, Philip Smith had been—as he considered it—a ruined man: at any rate he was unable to obtain employment. A ruined man must not be fastidious, and Smith was willing and was anxious to become a warder if they would make him one. It was while he was waiting and hoping for the post, and employed sometimes as an assistant, and thoroughly trusted, that the attempted escape of the prisoners occurred. Smith was one of those who put off in the boat after the fugitives: the other two being Hopley and O'Brian. In the scuffle on the Weymouth shore, Sir Adam was wounded and left for dead. O'Brian saw him lying there apparently dead, and supposed him to be so. O'Brian, however, afterwards received a blow that stunned him—for the night was dark, and friends and foes fought indiscriminately—and Smith contrived to get Sir Adam away into a place of concealment. It is very probable that Smith foresaw in that moment how valuable a prize to him the living and escaped Sir Adam might become. O'Brian really believed him to be dead, and so reported him to the authorities. A dead man is worthless: and Sir Adam was allowed to be retained by his friends for interment: the beaten and disfigured Cole, shot in the face, being looked upon as Sir Adam.

After that, the path was easy. Sir Adam, very badly injured, lay for many weeks hidden away. Smith continued at Portland Prison, keeping his own counsel; and, unsuspected, visiting Sir Adam cautiously at intervals. As soon as it was practicable for him to be moved, the step was ventured on. He was got away in safety to London, and lay in retirement there, in a house that had been taken by Smith: his wife (formerly Rose Turner) coming up to join him; and Ann Hopley, faithful to Sir Adam's fortunes through all, waiting on them. She had no one else left to be faithful to now, poor woman. Smith managed everything. He had withdrawn himself from Portland Island, under the plea that he could no longer, in consequence of his disabled arm, aspire to a wardership—for his arm had been damaged that fatal night, and it was thought he would never have the full use of it again. The plea was unsuspectingly received by the prison authorities. Smith retained his friendship with O'Brian, and occasionally corresponded

with him, getting from him scraps of useful information now and then. From that time his services were devoted to Sir Adam. It was he who communicated between Sir Adam and his mother; for letters they did not dare to transmit. It was he who first disclosed to Mrs. Andinnian the fact that Miss Rose Turner was her son's wife; it was he who made the arrangements for Sir Adam's taking up his abode at the Maze, and provided the disguise for him to arrive at Foxwood in, as the decrepid old husband of the servant, Ann Hopley. To do Mr. Smith justice, he had fought against the scheme of coming to the Maze; but Mrs. Andinnian and Adam were both bent upon it; and he yielded. Adam and his wife had stayed in London under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and she retained it.

Amidst the injuries Sir Adam received was one to the mouth and jaw. It destroyed those beautiful front teeth of his. After his recovery he sought the services of a clever but not much known dentist named Rennet, went to the pain of having the rest of his teeth extracted, and an entire set of false ones made. Two sets, in fact. The journey Rose took to London, when Miss Blake espied her with Karl, was for the purpose of getting one of these sets of teeth repaired, Sir Adam having broken the spring the night before. The teeth had to be conveyed personally to Mr. Rennet and fetched away; for they were too cautious to entrust him with their address.

And now it will be seen how Sir Adam had concealed himself at the Maze. In the daytime he was the toothless, hump-backed, infirm old Hopley, working at his garden, with enlarged knees and tottering steps: as soon as dusk came on, his false padding was thrown off with his smock-frock and coarse clothes, and he was the well-bred gentleman, Sir Adam Andinnian, in his evening attire and with his white and even teeth. His assumed rôle was maintained always during the day; his meals were taken in the kitchen to be safe in case of any possible surprise, Ann attending upon him with all respect. The delay in admitting Nurse Chaffen, kept waiting once on the wrong side of the kitchen door, was caused by "Hopley's" taking out his set of teeth and putting on his broad-brimmed hat: for it was convenient to assume the teeth during the short period devoted to dinner. The deafness was of course assumed as an additional precaution. Thus he had lived, in a state of semi-security, tending his flowers and occupied with the care of his garden generally, an employment that he loved so well. The day that General Lloyd's party went in, Karl was transfixed with apprehension and amazement to see Hopley showing himself. Adam enjoyed it: it was so like him to brave things; and he feared no danger from a pleasure party like that.

Well, I think that is all that is needed in the way of explanation; and we can go on. Karl was looking at the digging with regretful eyes.

"You ought to be glad to see me at work again, Karl, instead of groaning over it," cried Sir Adam.

"And so I should be, Adam, only that I fear you will feel its effects unpleasantly by and by."

"I asked him not to do it, but he only laughed at me," said Rose.

"Somebody must do it. I can't see the garden quite neglected. Besides, if I am well enough to work there's no reason why I should not. I am not sure, Karl, but I shall cheat you now."

"Cheat me?"

"By getting well. What should you say to that?"

"Thank heaven for it: and do my best to get you away to a place of safety."

"By George, old fellow, I don't know that I sha'n't. I am feeling as blithe as a bee. Rose, take yourself a trifle further off, out of the mould."

He was throwing about the spadefuls almost as well as he had ever thrown them in his strength. Rose was cheated into something like hope, and her face for the moment lost its sadness.

That same night—or rather on the following morning, for the dawn was more than glimmering—Karl in his bed began to dream that he was out in a shower of hail. It seemed to be falling with great violence; so much so that a sharper crash awoke him. Lying awake for a moment, and questioning where he was, he found the noise to be reality. The hail was beating on the chamber windows.

Was it hail? Scarcely. It was crashing but on one window, and only came at intervals. It sounded more like gravel. Karl rose and opened the window. Smith the agent stood underneath. A prevision of evil shook Karl as he leaned out.

"He is very ill indeed, sir," said Smith in the lowest whisper possible to be heard, and extending his finger to indicate the Maze. "Mr. Moore's there and thinks it will be for death. I thought you would like to know it."

"How did you hear it?" breathed Karl, in reply.

"Ann Hopley ran over and knocked me up, that I might go for the doctor."

"Thank you," replied Karl. "I'll be there directly."

Now it so happened that for some purposes of cleaning—for the Maze was not exempt from those periodical visitations any more than the humble dwelling of Mrs. Chaffen—Miss Blake's chamber had been temporarily changed to the one next to that recently occupied by Lady Andinnian. Miss Blake was in the habit of sleeping with her window open; and, not being asleep at the time, she had heard Mr. Smith's footsteps and the crashes at Sir Karl's window. Of course she was curious as to what could cause the noise, and at first thought of house-

breakers. Had Mr. Smith chanced to turn his head in the right direction during the colloquy with Sir Karl, he might have seen an elaborately night-capped head, peeping forth cautiously.

"Why, it is Mr. Smith!" thought Miss Blake, as he walked away. "What an extraordinary thing! He must have been calling Sir Karl up."

Listening inside as well as out, Miss Blake heard the bell that was in Hewitt's chamber ring gently: and, after a minute or two, Hewitt proceeded to his master's room. Then they both went down together, and Hewitt let Sir Karl out at the hall-door, and came upstairs again. Miss Blake, after a good deal of self-puzzling, arrived at the conclusion that the affair must be in some way connected with poachers—who had been busy on the land latterly—and returned to her bed.

With death on his face, and a look of resignation, than which nothing could be more peaceful, lay Sir Adam for the last time. His weary life, with all its bitter turmoil, was nearly at an end; night *here* was closing; morning *there* was opening. Karl's grey eyes were wet as he bent over him.

"Don't grieve too much," said Adam, with a smile, as he put his cold hand into Karl's clasp. "You know how much better off I shall be. Rose knows it."

"You were so full of hope yesterday, Adam."

"Was I? It cheated the wife into a few hours of pleasantness, and did its mission. I did not think I took *you* in. Why, Karlo, I have just been waiting from day to day for what has now come: moreover, I have seen how much best it all is *as* it is, than anything else would be. I would not accept life if you'd give it to me; unless the whole time since that Midsummer Eve could be blotted out."

Karl swallowed a sob.

"You don't know what it has been, Karl. No one can know what it is to live under an unsheathed sword, as I have lived, unless they experience it. And few in this world can do that. It was all a mistake together. The shooting of Scott when I ought to have horsewhipped him; the escape from Portland; the taking up my abode here; everything: and these mistakes, Karl, have to be worked out. I have paid for mine with life."

Karl did not answer. He was only nervously pressing the wasted hand in his.

"It is all, I say, for the best. I see it now. It was best that the little lad should go; it is best that I should; it is best that you should be the true owner of Foxwood. It would have been too much of a complication otherwise. The boy could never have put forth a claim to it while I lived; and, after that, people might but have pointed their scornful finger at him as the son of a convict. I thank God for taking him."

"Should you talk so much, Adam?"

"I don't know. A man in my condition, about to leave the world behind, prefers to talk while he can. You will take care of my wife, Karl. There was no settlement, you know, and——"

"I will take care of her to the best of my power, Adam," came the earnest interruption. "She shall have a proper and suitable jointure as the widowed Lady Andinnian."

"No, Karl; not that. She and I have talked over the future at odd moments, and we do not wish it. Rose does not mean to acknowledge her marriage with me, or to live in any kind of state in accordance with it. She will be Mrs. Grey to the end. Unless, indeed, any occasion were to arise, such as a tarnishing breath of scandal brought against this past period of her life. Then, of course, the truth must be declared, and you, Karl, would have to come forward and testify to it. I leave that in your hands."

"With every surety," assented Karl.

"A few hundreds a year, say four or five, are all that she will want from you, or take. Her late uncle's money must come to her sometime, and that of itself would be almost enough. She purposes to live a retired life with her aunt; and I think it will be the happiest for her. In my desk, Karl, you will find a paper in my handwriting, setting forth all these wishes of hers and mine; it will serve as a direction for you.—No," he went on, after a pause, "for her own peace, the world must never know her as Lady Andinnian. She dreads it too much. See you not the reason? She would have to stand before the public convicted of perjury. That past trial is rarely out of her mind, Karl—when she appeared falsely as Miss Rose Turner. The foolish things people do in their blindness! It was my fault. *Her* fault lay only in obeying me: but your charitable people would not accept that as an excuse. Be it as it may, Karl, Rose's life henceforth will be one of modest position and strict retirement. Ann Hopley goes with her."

Looking at the matter from all points of view, it might be, as Sir Adam said, for the best.

"And you will be Sir Karl in reality as well as in seeming, brother mine; and Foxwood will be your true home and your children's after you. That is only justice. When you arranged to marry Lucy Cleeve, you believed yourself to be the inheritor, and she believed it. My death will set all to rights. And now about Smith, Karl. The man did me a great service, for I should have been retaken but for him; and he has been faithful to me since. I should like you to allow him something in the shape of an annuity—a hundred and fifty pounds a year, or so. Not the cottage: he will not stay in this neighbourhood when I am gone. It was through me that his arm was injured: which of course partly incapacitates him for work; and I think I am bound to provide for him."

"It shall be done," said Karl. "Ungrudgingly."

"I have mentioned it in the paper, and the sum. He—he—"

Sir Adam's hesitation was caused by a faintness. He broke down, and for the time said no more. Nor did he recur to the subject again.

The day went on, Adam partially sleeping through it. At other times he lay in a kind of stupor. Mr. Moore attended at intervals; but nothing further could be done. At dusk, Hewitt came over for a last sight of his old master; for a last farewell: and he sobbed bitterly as it was taken.

Karl did not go home—at which Miss Blake was in much private wonder. Discarding the poacher theory, she shrewdly suspected now that he must be at the Maze, taking the opportunity of his wife's absence to play the gay bachelor away from home. She asked Hewitt, she questioned Giles. Giles knew nothing; Hewitt fancied Sir Karl might be "detained at Basham on some business."

And so the night set in. When quite awake, Adam had the full possession of his senses, and exchanged a few words, sometimes with his wife, sometimes with Karl. About three o'clock he fell into a calm sleep. Karl watched on; Rose, weak and sick and weary, dropped into a doze in a distant chair. Ann Hopley was in the kitchen below.

Save for the faint sighing of the wind as it swept round the house, stirring the branches of the trees, there was no sound to be heard. Stillness reigned unbroken in the dying chamber. How many of us have kept these watches! But who has kept them as this was being kept by Karl Andinnian!

With that bitter aching of the heart known but to few, and which when felt in its greatest intensity is the saddest pain the troubles of the world can give, Karl sat gazing on his brother. In his love for him, every pang endured by Adam in the past was a sting for him, every hazard run had reflected on him its dread apprehension. He sat thinking of what might have been; looking on what was: and an awful regret, than which nothing like unto it could be ever again experienced, tore at his heart-strings for the wasted life, cut short ere it had reached its prime. More than willingly in that moment would Karl have given his own remaining days to undo what his brother had done, and to restore to him freedom and honour. It might not be. Adam's course was run: and he was passing away in obscurity from the world in which he had virtually no longer a place. Never for a moment did the immunity from perplexity it would bring to himself, or the release from the false position he had been compelled to assume, occur to Karl; or, if it did, it was not dwelt upon: all of self and self-interest was lost in the regret and grief for his brother. He saw Adam living at Foxwood Court with his wife, its master; held in repute by men; he saw himself settled near with Lucy; his fortunes advanced by his brother's aid to a position not unacceptable to Colonel Cleeve; he saw his

mother alive still and happy: a united family, enjoying comfort the one with the other. This might have been. His mother dead of a broken heart; Adam, dying before his eyes, an escaped fugitive; his own life blighted with pain and sorrow unutterable for Adam's sake; his wife estranged from him—this was what was. Be you very sure that no earthly pang could be keener than that despairing heart-ache felt by Karl Andinnian.

How many a night at that still hour had Adam lain in his terror, listening to this moaning wind with supernaturally quick ear, lest it should be only covering other sounds—the approach of his deadly enemies! How many times in a night had he quitted his bed, his heart beating, and stolen a cautious peep beside the blind to see whether they might not be there, in battle array, waiting until the dawn should come and they might get in to take him! Ah, it was all at an end now; the fever, and the fear, and the wasting restlessness. Why! if the men were drawn up round his bed, they would not care to touch him. But the terror, from force of habit, stayed with him to the last.

He started up. How long he had slept, and how the night was going, Karl in his abstraction hardly knew. Adam's eyes looked somewhat wild in the shade of the night-light, and he put up his feeble hand.

"What is it?" asked Karl gently.

"I thought they were here, Karl; I saw them in the room," he whispered—and his eyes went round it. "They had muskets, I think. Was it a dream?"

"Nothing but a dream, Adam. I am with you. Rose is asleep in the arm-chair."

"Ay. I have not dreamt of them for a week past. Stay by me, Karlo."

Karl would have risen to administer some cordial: but Adam was holding his hand in a tight grasp. Had shut his eyes, and seemed to be dropping asleep again.

He slept about half an hour, and Karl's imprisoned arm went from a state of pins and needles into the cramp. When Adam awoke, there was a smile on his face and a peaceful rest in his eyes. He was quite collected.

"Karl, I dreamt of them again: but they had turned to angels. They were here, all about my bed. Oh, Karl, I wish you could see them as I saw them! you'd never be afraid of anything more in this world. What's that?"

Karl turned round: for Adam's eyes were fixed on something or other behind him. Karl could see nothing save a streak of light, herald of the dawn, that came in at the side of the blind.

"Do you mean the light, Adam? It's the dawn breaking."

"Ay. *My* dawn. Draw up the blind, Karl."

Softly, not to awake Rose, Karl drew it up. Rose-coloured clouds, heralds of a beauteous sunrise, flooded the east. Adam lay and gazed at it, the smile on his face changing to a rapt look that seemed to speak of heaven, more than of earth.

"It will be better there than here, Karl. For me."

"Better for all of us."

"I am very happy, Karl. The world is fading from me: Heaven opening. Forgive me all that I have cost you."

Karl's heart and eyes were alike full.

"Just as the men who had troubled me were changed into angels, so my fear has changed to rest. The angels are about the bed still, Karl; I know they are; waiting for me. The same lovely light shone on them that is shining yonder; and they told me without words that they were come to bear me up to God. I read it in their tender faces—so full of pitying love for me. It won't be so very long, Karl: you'll come later."

Karl's tears were falling on the upturned face.

"I should like to have seen your wife, Karl; just once. Tell her so, with my love. Ask her to forgive me the worry I know I have caused her."

"I will, I will."

"Oh, Karl, it has been a dreadful life for me; you know it has. I began to think that God had forgotten me—how foolish I was! He was full of mercy all the while, and kept me here in safety, and has now changed it all into peace. Listen, Karl! there's a sound of sweet music."

Karl could hear nothing but the wind.

"It is the angels singing," whispered Adam, a smile of ineffable beauty on his face. "They sing on the journey, you know. Good-bye, Karl, good-bye!"

Karl bent his face, his tears streaming, his heart aching. These partings are too bitter to be told of. This was most essentially so.

"Where's Rose, Karl?"

She was already by Karl's side. He yielded his place to her, and went down to Ann; and there sobbed over the kitchen fire as a woman might have done.

But in the midst of it all, he could say as his brother had done, "Thank God." If ever a poor sinful weary man had need to rejoice that he was removed to that better world, it was Adam Andinian.

Rose's bell called Karl up again. The last moment was at hand. Ann Hopley followed: and they all stood round the bed and saw him die. The red clouds had dispersed; the sun was just showing itself above the verge of the horizon.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LAID TO HIS REST.

FOXWOOD heard the news. Mrs. Grey's shaky old gardener, James Hopley, was dead. Mr. Moore, when applied to for particulars, went into a learned dissertation on chronic rheumatism, and said that he was not able to save him.

Ann Hopley astonished the undertaker. She gave orders for three coffins : and they must be of the best, she said, if it cost her a hundred pounds. Her poor husband and she had saved money, and she should like to spend it on him.

There was again a battle with the clerk. It had been bad enough when Ann Hopley chose the ground for Mrs. Grey's little child within the precincts of that belonging to the Andinnian family ; but to insist upon it that her own husband, a servant, should also lie there, was a piece of presumption the equal of which the clerk had never before heard of. However, Sir Karl, not waiting to be appealed to this time, called on the clerk, and said the woman might bury her husband there if she pleased ; he did not think it right in people to assume exclusiveness after death, whatever they might do in life. The clerk lifted his hands when Sir Karl's back was turned : radical notions such as these would tend to demoralize the best conservative community.

Tuesday came. About twelve o'clock in the day the funeral turned out of the Maze gates ; sundry curious ones amid the juveniles being assembled to witness the exit. A funeral was not an every-day event at Foxwood : and, besides, the Maze had been exciting interest of late. It was a simple funeral. The plumed hearse, and one mourning coach ; the undertaker and carriers walking. In the coach went Ann Hopley, smothered in a hood, with Hewitt to bear her company. Foxwood said it was very neighbourly and civil of the butler : but Miss Blake felt sure he had received private orders from Sir Karl, and she wondered what Sir Karl was coming to.

Now Lucy, Lady Andinnian, looking at things all cross-wise, as she had been looking, poor wife, for some time past, returned this day to Foxwood with her maid, Aglaé. By mistake they took the wrong train. That is, one that did not stop at Foxwood. Lucy discovered this after she was in the carriage, and found they must get out at Basham. Leaving Aglaé and the luggage to wait for the next train, which would not be up for two hours, she took one of the waiting flies, and drove on.

Lucy was full of thoughts and anticipations. She was close on Foxwood village before anything occurred to arouse her. The driver, who was a Foxwood man, had come very nearly to a standstill, and was staring at a funeral procession just then entering the churchyard.

The first object that caught Lucy's eye was Hewitt. Hewitt attired

as a mourner, and following the coffin. For a moment Lucy's heart beat quicker, and her gaze was strained : who could it be that was inside? Gradually her eyes took in the whole of the scene: the spectators collected in the distance; the person enveloped in a silk hood at Hewitt's side; Mr. Sumnor in his surplice.

All in a moment, as it seemed, just as the clergyman began to read, springing she could not tell from whence, there advanced Sir Karl Andinnian. He was in black attire, but wore neither crape band nor scarf; and it might have been thought he was only an ordinary spectator. Hewitt, however, drew a step back to give his master the place of precedence, as though out of proper respect, as did Ann Hopley: and Sir Karl took off his hat and stood there, close to the coffin, his bared head bent low.

"How very strange it is!" thought Lucy. "Who can be in the coffin?—and who is the woman in the black silk cloak and hood? There is Mr. Smith, the agent, too!—he is standing near with *his* hat off now."

"Lucy! Can it be you? We did not expect you until to-morrow."

The voice was Miss Blake's. St. Jerome's devotees were no more free from curiosity than their inferiors; and a few of them had chanced to be taking a walk past the churchyard just at the critical moment; of whom Miss Blake was one.

"I thought I would come to-day, and not give Sir Karl the trouble of fetching me," replied Lucy. "Aglæ is coming on from Basham by the next train with the luggage. How are you, Theresa? Will you come inside?"

Miss Blake's answer was to open the fly-door, seat herself by Lady Andinnian, and turn her gaze on the churchyard. The scene bore a charm for her as well as for Lucy.

"Why, that's Sir Karl there!" exclaimed Miss Blake, in surprise.

"Yes," assented Lucy. "And there's Hewitt—and Sir Karl's agent—and a mourner with her face hidden. Who is it that is being buried, Theresa?"

"Why, it's only the old gardener at the Maze. As to Hewitt, I suppose he had to go to keep the woman in countenance. The old man was her husband, you know."

"But what should bring Sir Karl there?"

"And standing first, as though he were chief mourner!" commented Miss Blake, devouring the scene with her condemning eyes, and giving the reigns to her thoughts. "I don't know why he is there, Lucy. There are several things that I have not attempted to understand for some time past."

"Is not that the part of the churchyard where the Andinnians lie?—where their vault is?"

"It is. But Hopley is being buried there, you see : and that infant, that you know of, was buried there. The clerk is in a fine way over it, people say : but Sir Karl ruled that it should be so."

"Drive on," cried Lucy to the coachman, in a tone as though the world and all things in it were grating on her. And the man did not dare to disobey the sharp command. But Miss Blake preferred to get out. With her whole heart she pitied Lucy.

The interment was over. The procession—what was left of it—went its way back again, Hewitt and Ann Hopley side by side in the coach. Sir Karl strolled away over the fields, and presently found himself joined by Mr. Smith.

"So your mission at Foxwood is over !" he sadly cried to the latter. "I have no more need to make believe I want an agent now."

"Ay, it's over, Sir Karl. Better for him almost that he had fallen in the fray off Weymouth ; that I had never saved him ; than have lived to what his life has since been."

"Better for him had he never come to the Maze," rejoined Sir Karl.

"It was none of my doing. As you know, sir."

"No : but you opposed his leaving it."

"As he was here, I did. I had but his interest at heart, Sir Karl : although I know you have thought the contrary. The chances were that he could not have got away in safety. In his own person he dared not have risked it ; and a decrepid figure like Old Hopley's must have attracted attention. But for that detective's pitching upon Foxwood to make a hunting-place of, I believe Sir Adam would have been most secure here."

"Well, it is over, with all its risks and chances," sighed Karl. "He did not forget you when he was dying. His wish was that you should enjoy a moderate annuity during your life : which I have undertaken to pay."

The agent's thanks, and they appeared very heartfelt and genuine, were cut short by the approach of Mr. Moore. He joined them as they walked along ; and the conversation fell on the illness of the deceased.

"There was no real hope from the beginning, once the disease had set fairly in," cried the surgeon. "All the advice in the world could not have availed to save his life. We sometimes say of people, death has been a happy release for them. In his case, Sir Karl, it has been most unquestionably so ; he is at rest."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

REPENTANCE.

DOWN on her knees, in self-abasement, the tears of contrition raining from her eyes, her face scarlet in its agony of shame, cowered Lucy Andinnian at her husband's feet. She would not let him raise her.

It seemed to her that a whole lifetime of repentance could never wash out her sin.

The elucidation of the misunderstanding that had kept them apart for months was taking place.

On the day after the funeral, Karl sought his wife in the dressing-room to tell her of what had occurred. She had scarcely spoken a word to him since her return, or allowed him to speak one to her. Very briefly, in half a dozen words, he informed her his brother was dead, and delivered the message Adam had left for her. Lucy's bewilderment was utter; and, when she did at length grasp somewhat of the truth, her confusion and distress were pitiable.

"Oh, Karl, Karl, do you think you will ever be able to forgive me? What can I do?—what can I do to atone for it?"

"You must get up, Lucy, before I say whether I forgive you or not."

"I cannot get up. It seems to me that I ought never to get up again. Your *brother* at the Maze!—your brother's wife! Oh, what must you have thought of my conduct? Oh, Karl, why do you not strike me as I lie?"

Sir Karl put forth his arms, and raised her to the sofa. She bent her face down on its pillow, to weep out her tears of shame.

"Come, Lucy," he said, when he had waited a few minutes, sitting beside her. "We shall not arrive at the end in this way. Is it *possible* that you did not know my brother was alive?"

"How could I know it, Karl?" she asked, amid her streaming tears. "How was I likely to know it?"

"You told me you knew it. You said to me that you had discovered the secret at the Maze. I thought you were resenting the fact of his being alive. Or, rather, of my having married you, knowing that he was."

"Why should I resent it? How could you think so? Was *that* the secret you spoke of in Paris the night before our wedding?—that Adam was alive."

"That, and no other. But I did not know then that he was married—or suspect that he ever would marry. I learnt that fact only during my mother's last illness."

"Oh, Karl, this is dreadful," she sobbed. "What must you have thought of me all this time? I almost wish I could die!"

"You still care for me, then; a little?"

"Care for you!"

With a burst of anguish she turned and hid her face upon his breast. "I have only loved you the better all the while," she whispered.

"Lucy, my dear, I say we shall not get to the end in this way. Look up. If you were in ignorance of my brother's existence, and of all the complications for you and for me that it involved, what then was it that you were resenting?"

"Don't ask me, Karl," she said, her face growing scarlet again. "I could not tell you for the shame."

He drew a little away, making a movement to put her from him. Never had his countenance been so stern to her as it was now; never could he be so little trifled with. Lucy shivered.

"If there is to be an explanation between us, Lucy, it must be full and complete. I insist upon its being so. If you refuse to give it now—why, I shall never ask you for it again. Do you not think you owe me one?"

Again she bent her crimson face upon him. "I owe you everything, Karl; I owe you more reparation than I can ever pay. Never, as long as our lives shall last, will I have a secret from you again, Heaven helping me. If I hesitate to tell you this, it is because I am ashamed for you to know how foolish I could be, and the wicked thoughts I could have."

"Not more foolish or wicked, I daresay, than I was for making you my wife. Speak out, Lucy. It must be so, you see, if there is to be a renewal of peace between us."

Keeping her head where it was, her face hidden from him, Lucy whispered her confession. Karl started from her in very astonishment.

"Lucy! You could think that! Of me!"

She put up her hands beseechingly. "Oh, forgive me, Karl; for the sake of the pain, forgive me! It seemed to be killing me all the while. See how worn and thin I am."

He put his arm out and drew her to his side. "Go on, my dear. How did you pick up the notion?"

"It was Theresa." And now that the ice was broken, anxious to tell all and clear herself, Lucy described the past in full: the cruel anguish she had battled with, and her poor, ever-to-be renewed efforts to endure patiently, for his sake and for God's. Karl's arm involuntarily tightened around her.

"Why did you not speak to me of this at once, Lucy?" he asked, after a pause. "It would have cleared it up, you see."

"I did speak to you, Karl; and you seemed to understand me entirely, and to accept it all as truth. You must remember your agitation, and how you begged me not to let it come to an exposure."

"But I thought you alluded to the trouble about my poor brother; that it was the fact of his being alive you had discovered and were resenting. *That* was the exposure I dreaded. And no wonder; for, if it had come, it would have sent him back to Portland Island."

Lucy wrung her hands. "What a miserable misapprehension it has been!—and how base and selfish and cruel I must have appeared to you! I wonder, Karl, you did not put me away from you for ever!"

"Will you go now?"

She knew it was asked in jest; she probably knew that neither would have parted from the other for the wealth of worlds. And she nestled the least bit closer to him.

"Karl!"

"Well?"

"Why did you not tell me about your brother when you found I knew something, and was resenting it? If I had but known the real truth, we never should have been at issue for a day."

"Remember, Lucy, that I thought it was what you knew, and spoke of. I thought you knew he was alive and was at the Maze with his wife. When I would have given you the whole history from the first, you stopped me and refused to hear. I wished to give it, that you might see I was less to blame than you seemed to be supposing. It has been a wretched play at cross-purposes on both sides; and neither of us, that I see, is to blame for it."

"Poor Sir Adam!" she cried, the tears again falling. "Living in that dreadful fear day after day! And what must his poor wife have suffered! And her baby dying, and now her husband! And I, instead of giving sympathy, have thought everything that was ill of her, and hated her and despised her. And Karl—why, Karl—*she* must have been the real Lady Andinnian."

He nodded. "Until Adam's death, I was not Sir Karl, you see. The day you came with her from Basham, and they told her the fly, waiting at the station, was for Lady Andinnian, she was stricken with terror, believing they meant herself."

"Oh, if I had known all this time!" bewailed Lucy. "Stuck up here in my false pride and folly, instead of helping you to shield them and to lighten their burthen! I cannot hope that you will ever quite forgive me in your heart, Karl."

"Had it been as I supposed it was, I am not quite sure that I should. Not quite, Lucy, even to our old age. You took it up so harshly and selfishly, looking at it from my point of view, and resented it in so extraordinary a fashion, so bitter a spirit——"

"Oh don't, don't!" she pleaded, slipping down to his feet again in the depth of her remorse, the old sense of shame on her burning cheeks. "Won't you be merciful to me? I have suffered much."

"Why, my darling, you are mistaking me again," he cried tenderly, as he once more raised her. "I said, 'Looking at it from my point of view.' Looking at it from yours, Lucy, I am amazed at your gentle forbearance. Few young wives would have been as good and patient as you."

"Then do you really forgive me, Karl?" she asked, raising her eyes and her wet cheeks.

"Before I answer that, I think I must ask whether you forgive my having married you—now that you know all."

"Oh, Karl!"

She fell upon his shoulder, her arms round his neck. Karl caught her face to his.

"Karl, would you please let me go to see her?" she whispered.

"See whom?" asked Karl, in rather a hard tone, his mind pretty full just then of Miss Blake.

"Poor Lady Andinnian."

"Yes, if you will," he softly said. "I think she would like it. But, my dear, you must call her 'Mrs. Grey' remember. Not only for safety, but that she would prefer it."

They went over in the afternoon. Miss Blake, quite accidentally this time, for she was returning home quietly from confession at St. Jerome's, saw them enter. It puzzled her not a little. Sir Karl taking his wife *there*! What fresh ruse, what further deceit was he going to try? Oh but it was sinful! Worse than anything ever taken to Mr. Cattacomb for absolution at St. Jerome's.

Lucy behaved badly; without the slightest dignity whatever. The first thing she did was to burst out crying, and kiss Mrs. Grey's hand: as if—it really seemed so to Mrs. Grey—she did not dare to offer to kiss her cheek. Very sad and pretty she looked in her widow's mourning.

It was a sad interview: though in some respects a soothing and satisfactory one. Lucy explained, without entering into any details whatever, that she had not known who it was residing at the Maze, or she should have been over before, Karl and Sir Adam permitting her. Rose supposed that for safety's sake Karl had deemed it well to keep the secret intact. And there the matter ended.

"You will come and stay with me at the Court before you leave," pleaded Lucy.

Rose shook her head. "It is very kind of you to wish it, Lady Andinnian; very kind indeed under the circumstances; but it could not be. I shall not pass through these gates until I pass through them with Ann Hopley for good. That will be very soon."

"At least, you will come to us sometime in the future."

"I think not; unless I should get a fever upon me to see the spot once more that contains my husband and child. In that case, I might trespass on you for a day or two if you would have me. Thank you very much, Lady Andinnian."

"You will let me come over again before you leave?"

"Oh, I should be pleased—if Sir Karl has no objection. Thank *you*, Karl," she added, holding out her hands to him, "thank you for all. You have been to us ever the most faithful friend and brother."

The church bell at Foxwood was ringing for the late afternoon service as they quitted the Maze—for Mr. Sumnor, in spite of his discouragement and the non-attendance, kept up the daily service.

"Karl," said Lucy, "I should like to go to prayers this evening. I shall take no harm : it is scarcely dusk yet."

He turned with her. Mr. Sumnor and the clerk were in the church : hardly anybody else—just as it had been that other evening when Lucy had crept in. Even Miss Diana was off to St. Jerome's, in the wake of her flighty nieces. Lucy went on to her own pew this time.

Oh, what a contrast it was !—this evening and that. Now she was utterly still in her rapt thankfulness ; then she had lain on the floor, her heart crying aloud to God in its agony. What could she do to show her gratitude to Him, who had turned the darkness into this radiant light ? She could do nothing. Nothing, save strive to let her whole life be spent as a thank-offering. Karl noted her excessive stillness, her blinding tears ; and he probably guessed her thoughts.

While he was talking with Mr. Sumnor after the service, Lucy went in to the vicarage. Margaret was alone in the dusk.

"Oh, Margaret, I was obliged to come to you just for a minute. Karl is outside, and we have been to church. I have something to tell."

Margaret Sumnor put out both her hands in token of welcome. Instead of taking them, Lucy knelt by the reclining board, and brought her face close to her friend's, and spoke in a hushed whisper.

"Margaret, I want to thank you, and I don't know how. I have been thinking how impossible it will be for me ever to thank God : and it seems to be nearly as impossible ever to thank you. Do you remember what you once said to me, Margaret, about bearing and waiting ? Well, but for you, I don't think I *could* have borne and waited, even in the poor way I have ; and—and——"

She broke down : sobs of emotion checked her utterance.

"Be calm, my dear," said Margaret. "You have come to tell me that the trouble is over."

"Yes : God has ended it. And, Margaret, I never need have had a shade of it : I was on a wrong track all the while. I—I was led to think evil of my husband ; I treated him worse than anyone will ever know or would believe : while he was good and loyal to the core in all ways, and in the most bitter trouble the world can inflict. Oh, Margaret, had I been vindictive instead of patient—I might have caused the most dire injury and tribulation, and what would have been my condition now, my dreadful remorse through life ? When the thought comes over me, I shiver as I did in that old ague fever."

A fit of shivering took her actually. Miss Sumnor saw how the matter had laid upon her.

"Lucy, my dear, it seems to me that you may put away these thoughts now. God has been merciful and cleared it to you, you say ; and you ought to be happy."

"Oh, so merciful !" she sobbed. "So happy ! But it might have been otherwise, and I cannot forget, or forgive myself."

"Do you remember, Lucy, what I said? That some day when the cloud was removed your heart would go up with a great bound of joyous thankfulness?"

"Yes. Because I did—and have done—as Margaret told me; and bore."

The affair had indeed laid no slight hold on Lucy. She could not forget what might have been the result, and quite an exaggerated remorse set in.

A few nights afterwards Karl was startled out of his sleep by her. She had awoke, it appeared, in a sad state of terror, and had turned to seize hold of him with a nervous grasp, as of one who is drowning. Shaking, sobbing, moaning, she frightened her husband. He would have risen to get a light, but she clung to him too tightly.

"But what has alarmed you, Lucy?—what is it?" he reiterated.

"I dreamt it, Karl; I did, indeed," she sobbed, in her bitter distress. "I am always thinking of it by day, but this time I dreamt it; and I awoke believing it was true."

"Dreamt what?" he asked.

"I thought that cruel time was back again. I thought that I had not been quiet and patient, as Margaret enjoined, leaving vengeance to God, but had taken it into my own hands, and so had caused the Maze's secret to be discovered. You and Adam had both died through it; and I was left all alone to my dreadful repentance, on some barren place surrounded by turbid water."

"Lucy, you will assuredly make yourself ill."

"But, oh Karl, if it had been true! If God had not saved me from it!"

CHAPTER XL.

ONLY A MAN LIKE OTHER MEN.

THEY stood together in the north parlour: Sir Karl Andinnian and Miss Blake. In the least severe terms he knew how to employ, Sir Karl was telling her of her abuse of his hospitality—the setting his wife against him—and intimating that her visit to them had better for the present terminate.

It took Miss Blake by surprise. She had remarked a difference in their behaviour to one another in the past day or two. Lucy scarcely left Sir Karl alone a minute: she was with him in his parlour; she clung to his arm in unmistakable fondness in the garden; her eyes were for ever seeking his with a look of pleading, deprecating love. "They could not have been two greater simpletons in their honeymoon," severely thought Miss Blake.

Something else had rather surprised her. Walking past the Maze on this same morning, she saw the gate propped open, and a notice, that the house was to let, erected on a board. The place was empty;

the late tenants of it, the lady and her maid, had departed. Turning to ask Mr. Smith the meaning of this, she saw a similar board at his house: Mr. Smith was packing up, and Clematis Cottage was in the market.

"Good gracious! Are you going to leave us, Mr. Smith?" she asked, as that gentleman showed himself for a moment at the open window, with an armful of books and papers.

"Sorry to say that I am, madam. Business is calling me to London."

"I hear that Mrs. Grey has left. What can have taken her away?"

"Don't know," said Mr. Smith. "Does not care to stop in the house, perhaps, after a death has taken place in it. Servants must die as well as other people, though."

Without another word to her, he went to the back of the room with his load, and began stuffing it into a trunk with his one arm. Miss Blake summed up the conclusion in her mind.

"Sir Karl must have summarily dismissed him."

Little did she foresee that Sir Karl was about, so to say, summarily to dismiss herself. On this same day it was that he sought the interview. When the past was touched upon by Karl, and her part in it, Miss Blake, for once in her life, showed signs that she had a temper.

"You might have done me mischief that could never be repaired in this world," he said, standing to face her. "I do not allude to the estrangement that might have been caused between myself and my wife, but evil of a different nature. What could possibly have induced you to take up so outrageous a notion in regard to me?"

"Miss Blake, in rather a shrill tone—for she was one of those unfortunate individuals whose voices grow harsh with annoyance—ventured upon a disparaging word of Mrs. Grey, but evaded the true question. Karl did not allow her to go on.

"That lady, madam," he said, raising his hand with a kind of solemnity, "was good and pure, and honourable as is my own wife; and my dear wife knows it now. She was sacred to me as a sister. Her husband was my dear and long-tried friend; and he was for some months in great trouble and distress. I wished to do what I could to alleviate it: my visits there were paid to *him*."

"But he was not living there," rejoined Miss Blake, partly in hardy contest, partly in surprise.

"Indeed he was living there. He had his reasons for not wishing to make any acquaintance in the place, and so kept himself in retirement; reasons in which I fully acquiesced. However, his troubles are at an end now; and—and the family have ceased to be my tenants."

Whether Miss Blake felt more angry or more vexed, she was not collected enough at the moment to know. It was a very annoying termi-

nation to her long and seemingly well-grounded suspicions. She always wished to do right, and had the grace to feel ashamed of the past.

"What I said to Lucy I believed I had perfectly good grounds for, Sir Karl. I had the interests of religion at heart when I spoke."

"Religion!" repeated Sir Karl, his lips involuntarily curling. "Religion is as religion does, Miss Blake."

"After all, your wife did not heed me; so, if it did no good, it did no harm. Lucy is so very weak-minded—"

"Weak-minded!" interposed Sir Karl. "If to act as she did—to bear patiently and make no stir under extreme provocation, trusting to the future to right the wrong—if this is to be weak-minded, why I thank God that she is so. Had she been strong-minded as you, Miss Blake, the result might have been terribly different."

Miss Blake was nettled. "I see what it is, Sir Karl; you and your wife are so displeased with me that I feel my presence in your house is no longer welcome. I should not have trespassed on you so long—in fact, I should not have stayed at all after your first return here with Lady Andinnian, but for St. Jerome's," she rejoined, her temper getting up again, while there ran in her mind an undercurrent of thought, as to whether she could find suitable lodgings in Foxwood.

"You will not have to regret that, in leaving," he observed. "I am about to do away with St. Jerome's. In a week's time from this it will be shut up, and all the nonsense within its walls cleared away."

"The nonsense?" shrieked Miss Blake.

"Why you cannot call it sense—or religion either. To tell you the truth, Miss Blake, the place has been an offence to me. It has caused a scandal—"

"For shame, Sir Karl Andinnian! Scandal, indeed!"

"And this little bit of fresh scandal, that has arisen now, people don't like at all," quietly persisted Sir Karl. "Neither do I. So, to prevent the bishop coming down upon us here, Miss Blake, I close the place."

Miss Blake compressed her lips. She could have struck him as he stood. "What do you mean by a 'fresh' scandal, pray?"

"Well, the story runs that Mr. Cattacomb was seen to kiss one of the young ladies in the vestry."

Miss Blake started, Miss Blake shrieked, Miss Blake wondered that the very ceiling did not drop down upon the bold false tongue. To do her justice, she believed St. Jerome's pastor was by far too holy a man for any wickedness of the sort.

"Sir Karl, may you be forgiven! Where do you expect to go to when you die?"

"To the heaven, I hope, that our merciful God has provided for us," he answered, meeting the query solemnly and with some emotion. "Some of those dearer to me than life have gone on thither to wait for me."

At which Miss Blake drew up her pious head, and intimated that she feared it might be another kind of place, unless he should mend his manners. And Sir Karl closed the interview, leaving her to understand that she had received her congé.

The circumstance to which he alluded was this. A day or two before, some prying boys, comrades of Tom Pepp's, had seen the parson steal a kiss or two from the blushing cheek of Miss Jemima Moore. Rare nuts for the boys to crack! Before the day had closed, it was being talked of in Foxwood, and reached the ears of Miss Diana. She handed the case over to the doctor.

Down he went to St. Jerome's on the following morning, and caught Mr. Cattacomb alone in the vestry, just getting into his sheepskin. Mr. Moore wasted no time in circumlocution or superfluous greeting.

"You were seen to kiss my daughter, yesterday, young man."

To be pounced upon in this unadverted manner is enough to try the nerves of almost any hero; what must it have been then for a modest young clergyman, with a character for holiness, like Guy Cattacomb? He stammered and stuttered, and blushed to the very roots of his scanty hair. The tippet itself turned of a rosy hue.

"No equivocation, sir. Do you acknowledge it, or do you not?"

Gathering up his scared wits, and a modicum of courage, the Reverend Guy virtually acknowledged it to be true. He added that he and Miss Jemima were seriously attached to each other; that he hoped sometime to win her for his wife; and that a sense of his utter want of means had alone prevented his speaking to the doctor.

"Now, look here," said the surgeon, after a pause of consideration, perceiving from the young man's earnest manner that this was the actual state of the case, "I say *No* to you at present. It lies with yourself whether I ever say *yes*. If you and she care for one another, I should be the last to stand in your way, once you have proved yourself worthy of her. Get rid of all the rubbish that's filling up your foolish brain;"—and he gave his hand a sweep around—"become a faithful honest clergyman of the Church of England, serving your Master to the best of your power; and then you may ask for her. A daughter of mine shall never tie herself to a vain fop. No; though I had to banish her to the wilds of Kamschatka."

"I'll do my best, sir, to become what you will approve of," returned the parson humbly, "if you will only give me hope of Miss Jemima."

"It is because I think you have some good in you, that I do give you hope, Mr. Cattacomb. The issue lies with you."

Now, this was what Sir Karl alluded to. When it fell to Miss Blake's lot to find it was true and to hear the particulars, she thought, in her mortification, that the world must be drawing to an end; at least, it was signally degenerating. That admired saint to have turned out to be only a man after all—with all a man's frail nature!

She and the congregation generally were alike incensed. Mr. Cattacomb, lost to any future hopes, fell in their estimation from fever-heat down to zero ; and they really did not much care, after this, whether St. Jerome's was shut up or not. So Sir Karl and Farmer Truefit found their way was made plain before them.

"What a heap of silk we have wasted 'on cushions and things for him !" cried Charlotte St. Henry, in a passion. "And all through that sly little cat, Jemima Moore !"

CONCLUSION.

A SWEET calm day in early spring. Sir Karl and his wife stood on the steps of their house, hand in hand, ready to welcome Colonel and Mrs. Cleeve, who were driving up to pay a long visit. Lucy had recovered all her good looks ; Karl's face had lost its sadness.

Things had been getting themselves straight after the dark time of trouble. Some pleasant neighbours were at the Maze now ; Clematis Cottage was occupied by Margaret Sumnor. There was a new vicar of Foxwood. Mr. Sumnor, who had not been without his trials in life, had died in the winter. His widow and second family went to reside in London ; Margaret, who had her own mother's fortune now—which was just enough to live upon quietly—removed to Clematis Cottage, to the extreme delight of Lady Andinnian. St. Jerome's had been converted into a school-room again ; its former clergymen had retired into private life for a season, and no more omnibus-loads of young ladies came over from Basham. Sir Karl was earning popularity everywhere. Caring earnestly for those about him, actively promoting the welfare of all, unceasingly and untiringly, generous in aiding, chary of fault-finding, Sir Karl Andinnian was esteemed and beloved even more than Sir Joseph had been. Nothing educates and softens the human heart like the sharp school of adversity.

"Lucy, you are a puzzle to me," said Mrs. Cleeve, when she had her daughter to herself up stairs. "In the autumn you were so ill and so sad ; now you are looking so well and so radiantly happy."

"I am quite well, mamma. And happy."

"But what was the cause of your looking so ill then ?"

Lucy evaded the question in the best way she could. The past time would be ever sacred between herself and her husband.

"Well, I cannot understand it," concluded Mrs. Cleeve. "I only hope you will continue as you are now. Sir Karl looks well, also ; almost as he did when we first knew him at Winchester, before his brother brought that trouble on himself and all connected with him. To tell you the truth, Lucy, I thought when I was last here that you were both on the highroad to consumption. Now you both look as though you were on the road to—to——"

"A fine old age," put in Lucy, as her mother broke down for want of a simile. "Well, mamma, I hope we are—if God shall so will it."

"And—why you have made this into a dressing-room again!" cried Mrs. Cleeve, as Lucy took down her hair, and rang for Aglaé.

"Yes; I wanted it as one when I went back to my own room."

"What do you do with the other room—the one you slept in?" questioned Mrs. Cleeve, throwing open the door as she spoke—for she had a great love of seeing into house arrangements. "You have had the bed taken away!"

"The room is not being used at present," replied Lucy. "Karl—Karl——"

"Karl—what?" asked Mrs. Cleeve, wondering at the sudden timidity, and looking round. Lucy's sweet face was blushing.

"Karl thinks I shall like to make it the day nursery."

"Oh, my dear! I am glad to hear *that*."

Lucy burst into tears of emotion. A very slight occurrence served still to bring back the past and its repentance.

"Mamma, you do not know, you can never know, how good God has been to me in all ways; and how little I deserved it."

And so we leave all things at peace. The dark storms had rolled away and given place to sunshine.

THE END.



THE BURGOMASTER'S GUEST.*

Adapted for Private Representation from the German of Kötzebue.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.†

HERR NICHOLAS STAAR, Burgomaster of Krowwinkel.

ALBERT OLMERS, the Stranger Guest.

SPARROW.

} Suitors to ANNA.

KLAUS, the Constable.

FRAU STAAR, Mother of the Burgomaster.

ANNA, Daughter of the Burgomaster.

FRAU BRENDL, a widow lady of a certain age, cousin to the Burgomaster.

MARGARET, the Maid.

SCENE I. A ROOM IN THE BURGOMASTER'S HOUSE.

*Enter ANNA, running hastily across the stage.**Anna. (calling) Margaret, Margaret!**The Maid. (outside) Yes, ma'am.**Anna.* The postman is come. Run and see if there is a letter for me. (*Comes forward.*) It is five weeks already since I left Berlin, and I have not had a line yet! Now, if I am disappointed again to-day, then, why, then—what then? Then I shall be angry and marry Sparrow! No; I can be angry without marrying Sparrow; for who would be the most punished then, I wonder?*Marg. (entering) Here is a letter, ma'am.**Anna. (snatching the letter) At last, at last! (examines the address) From my cousin.**Marg.* There are the newspapers (*puts them on the table*). It is such a busy day at the post-office. Sixteen letters are come, and all for Krowwinkel. The postmaster did not know whether he was standing on his head or his heels! [*Exit MARGARET.*]

(* This play, so well adapted for private representation, is inserted—First for its own merits, and for the interest it bears to the general reader. Secondly, because at this period of the year, so many families, acting plays or charades, find it frequently difficult to meet with one that in no way offends against good taste or refinement, or against even yet weightier considerations. The "Burgomaster's Guest" is not only interesting and entertaining, but also instructive, as presenting a true picture of German life of years ago.)

† COSTUMES—That of the latter half of the eighteenth century; bearing in mind that Olmers and Anna must be dressed in a style perceptibly more modern than the others—Anna with the "bare neck" and "frizzed hair" objected to by her grandmother. And Olmers with unpowdered hair, and quiet, dark, handsome suit, contrasting as strongly as possible with Sparrow's gaudy, old-fashioned, many-coloured finery.

Anna (alone, reads). "A new play"—what does that matter to me? "Trains are going out of fashion"—who cares to know that? "A Leghorn hat"—who wanted to hear of that? What! is that all? Not a word about *him*? Certainly, I forbade him to write to me himself: that would not do; but he promised through my cousin, and she too promised—why have not they kept their word? Am I forgotten already? He intended to come himself with a letter of introduction from the Prime Minister, and to ask my father's consent, but he has neither come nor written. And he knows about Sparrow! My father plagues me, my grandmother plagues me, and now he will plague me too! (*tears up the letter*). It serves me right! They warned me well beforehand against the young men of Berlin. They fall in love three times a day, and when they go to the play in the evening they forget all about it. But Albert, Albert! are you indeed like other men?—are you too only a deceiver? (*takes a miniature out of her pocket*) Can this truthful face deceive? With this very look he promised me to come himself in a few weeks and gain my father's consent. Are five weeks few? Must I count up five-and-thirty long, dreary days? O Albert, come! or I shall be lost to you! (*gazes sadly at the miniature*)

Enter FRAU STAAR.

Frau S. Anna, the cakes are out of the oven; beautiful cakes! they do you credit. Now we will ornament them with sprays of myrtle,—you know why! What a festival we shall have to-morrow! What have you got there?

Anna. (starting, and hiding the miniature) Nothing, dear grandmother.

Frau S. Oh, indeed! But it *was* something; it looked like a spectacle-case. Give it here—give it me; I want it.

Anna. (giving it) It is only a portrait.

Frau, S. A portrait!! a man's portrait!!! Good gracious, child! I will raise the house! I will cry Fire!

Anna. For Heaven's sake, no, dear grandmother!

Frau S. What! The picture of a strange man in your pocket! perhaps in your heart too?

Anna. It is only a man in a glass and frame.

Frau S. Oh, don't teach *me* anything about men: they slip out of their frames before one thinks. I was always against sending you to Berlin. I was a well-brought-up young woman in my time, never knew more of the capital than that our gracious King lived there. Now we see the consequence! She has brought home pictures with her—men's pictures! Ah! in those days no one was painted who had not a high office and an honourable title, and who had not been married at least ten years. Then it was done with suitable gravity, as large as life—a deep lace collar round the neck and a large

nosegay in the hand ; as your grandfather hangs behind the kitchen cupboard—the Honourable Deputy Tax-gatherer, peace be with him ! Large pictures hang honourably and openly before the whole world, but these little miniatures slip like thieves into every one's pocket, and even hang from ribbons and chains hidden in the dress. Who is the man ? Speak, child ; out with it !

Anna. (*hesitating*) Indeed, grandmother, there's no cause—

Frau L. Come, who is it ?

Anna. It is—(*aside*) What shall I tell her ? (*aloud*) It is the portrait of the King.

Frau S. (*doubtfully*) Of the King ?

Anna. My cousin sent it me, because she knew we all love him.

Frau S. Ah, to be sure ! that's another thing. So that is the King ; I have long wished to see him. But he has no star ?

Anna. He does not need one to make him shine.

Frau S. Yes, yes ; that was a very good thought of your cousin's. Here, Anna, you must give me this picture ; I will wear it as an aigrette upon my cap.

Anna. (*aside*) Oh, goodness !

Frau S. I will lend it to you on festivals and holidays ; for instance, to-morrow, on your betrothal day.

Anna. Sooner will I never wear it at all ! No betrothal for me !

Frau S. Quite right, my dear : you ought to be coy : cry a little ; hide yourself ; that is most becoming—I did so. Now-a-days, girls stare their lovers full in the face, and talk of a betrothal as if it were a receipt for an almond tart.

Anna. I can't bear that Sparrow, grandmother : he sticks to me like a burr, and chatters like a magpie. In short, he is a fool.

Frau S. Child, child ! what are you saying ? Govern your tongue ! I have heard many girls scoff, who were very glad when the man they scoffed at took them home.

Anna. I would rather die an old maid.

Frau S. But what can you find to say against him ? Has he not a fine title ? is he not Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges ?

Anna. That does not weigh with me.

Frau S. Were not his parents respectable people ? His grandfather sat in the Town Council.

Anna. That makes no difference.

Frau S. You will be received at once into a large family circle.

Anna. So much the worse !

Frau S. A host of cousins. The one will help here, the other there.

Anna. Oh yes ; every week a family party !

Frau S. Very nice ; then you will never feel lonely. You will have a magnificent trousseau—table linen for eighteen persons. Cousin

Sparrow has beautiful silver plate; he is, besides, in very good circumstances: he has a kitchen-garden before the door and a family vault in the church.

Anna. I wish he were lying in it himself!

Frau S. Hold your tongue, you naughty girl! He is to be your husband, and there's an end of it.

Enter the BURGOMASTER.

Burgo. Anna, fetch my wig. I must go to the Town Hall.

Frau S. What is going on?

[*Exit ANNA.*]

Burgo. Is not everything on my shoulders?—the well-being of the whole city? The lawsuit between Master Barsch and the watchman about the broken lantern, is to be decided to-day.

Re-enter ANNA.

Anna. Here is your wig, father.

Frau S. It is quite settled, son Nicholas, that Anna's betrothal shall take place to-morrow?

Burgo. (*settling his wig with ANNA'S assistance*). Certainly. It will be a memorable day: the woman who stole the cow nine years ago will be placed in the pillory, and my daughter Anna will be betrothed to Sparrow.

Frau S. The girl opposes it.

Burgo. What? I am Burgomaster and Senior Alderman: nobody may oppose me.

Anna. Dear father!

Burgo. First duty, then love (*rearranges the wig*). It behoves me to do honour to an alliance which will bring happiness to our great-grandchildren. Be easy, child; the Honourable Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges is a man of importance in the town.

Frau S. Just what I said.

Burgo. He has good means.

Frau S. My very words!

Burgo. And besides, he has a pretty talent for versemaking. In short, I have chosen him to be my son-in-law, and I will not listen to any more idle objections.

Anna. (*aside*) Alas, alas! every one is against me.

Enter the MAID, with a letter.

Maid. A man has brought this. The gentleman is lying in the stone-quarry yonder. His carriage is broken, and he is badly bruised, and he gave the man a crown-piece to bring the letter here.

Frau S. Perhaps he is coming to to-morrow's festival.

Anna. (*aside*) Or perhaps—O how my heart beats!

Burgo. (*opens the letter*) What! what's this? From His Excellency

the Prime Minister! the great patron of our town! Be silent—hear! (*reads*) “My dear Burgomaster”—Oh yes, His Excellency always loved me—“The bearer of this, my friend at college, Herr Olmers—”

Anna. (*aside*) 'Tis he!

Burgo. Hush!—“has heard much in praise of you and of your town, and wishes to spend some weeks there.” Do you hear? At Berlin they talk of nothing but of me and of our town. “As I have the highest esteem and affection for him, I beg you to do me the favour to receive him into your house”—His Excellency has but to wish—“to forward his wishes in every possible manner”—It shall be done—“and to treat him as your own son.” Be it so. “I shall with the greatest pleasure take every opportunity of being of use to you.” Too much goodness. “I have the honour to remain, with the greatest respect, the Worshipful Burgomaster’s most obedient servant, the Duke of Hochberg.” All written with his own hand! Do you hear? (*to the maid*). Let the man return at once, and say that I send the strange gentleman my deepest respects, and that my own carriage shall in a few moments be at his service. [*Exit MAID.*]

Frau S. I do not like that, my son; you should not have sent the stranger your deepest respects; it is too much.

Burgo. Too much? Is he not the friend of His Grace the Duke, and is not His Grace the Duke my most obedient servant?

Frau S. Very true, but he has neither title nor office; he is plain Herr Olmers. Now *you* are Burgomaster and Senior Alderman.

Burgo. I think you are quite mistaken, mother. If Herr Olmers were really nothing but plain Herr Olmers, the Prime Minister would not trouble his head about him. No, no; Herr Olmers is travelling incognito, and is some important personage in the State.

Frau S. But what can he want here?

Burgo. Is the town deficient in objects of interest? There is the old Town Hall—it was built in 1430—where the General of Hussars boxed the ears of the Burgomaster.

Frau S. Yes; and the whale’s skeleton hanging from the ceiling—

Burgo. And the town-clock, where the cock crows and the Apostle Peter nods his head—

Frau S. And the great stag’s antlers—

Burgo. A Pomeranian Duke slew that stag with his own illustrious hand. But we ought to think about preparing a suitable reception for the stranger.

Frau S. Anna, make the children put on their white frocks.

[*Exit ANNA.*]

Frau S. (*to her son*) You must send for Sparrow; he shall teach them to strew flowers: it is the fashion now.

Burgo. Mother, you and Anna must make yourselves busy. Nothing must be served on pewter to-day; all on china. All the silver in the

house must be put upon the table. My silver snuff-box can be used as a salt-cellar. The great tankard with my name engraved upon it must be set for the stranger. Bring up two bottles of the best Naumburger. Now I will go for the trumpeter to blow a blast when the stranger arrives at the door. [Exit BURGOMASTER.]

Frau S. (alone) Bless me, some guests ought to be invited! I must send for cousin Brendel to advise me. Margaret! Margaret!

Enter the MAID.

Run quick to my cousin Brendel, and say the Honourable Widow of the Deputy Tax-gatherer sends her best compliments to the Honourable Widow of the Superintendent of Fisheries; and if she will have the goodness to visit her, the Honourable Widow of the Deputy Tax-gatherer will be much obliged, as a great event has happened in the family. [Exit MAID.]

Now I must put on my flowered jacket, and another cap; but, dear me! the barber only comes on Sundays and holidays! What is to be done? Nicholas never thinks of anything! If he had left the gentleman lying in the stone-quarry for two or three hours, he could have been received properly.

Enter FRAU BRENDL.

Frau Bren. (curtseying deeply, FRAU STAAR curtseying to her, then embracing). At your service, my dearest cousin; see how I have hurried! I have no breath left. Am I too late? Excuse my saying so, but I was sitting in my night-gown, combing my poodle and singing my morning hymn. At the third verse your maid ran in—"Bless me," I thought, "the house must be on fire!" Up I jumped—the poodle fell off my lap—the hymn-book into the charcoal pan where I was warming my coffee—the coffee was overturned into the charcoal, and two verses of the hymn were burnt.

Frau S. I am exceedingly sorry, my dear cousin—

Frau B. It does not matter. But I know everything already. Three or four princes are lying in the stone-quarry—one is dead, the others have not long to live—the coachman has broken his neck, and all the four horses are at the last gasp. The Honourable Crown Lawyer, Balg, met me in the street; he had it from the wife of the Inspector of Lotteries.

Frau S. No, no; not so bad as that. A gentleman of high rank has broken his carriage—

Frau B. A noble prince?

Frau S. We do not know yet. But he must certainly be of high rank, for he will not stay at the Golden Cat, but at our house. Now, as my son is Burgomaster and Senior Alderman, it behoves him, in the name of the city, to do the stranger all the honour in his power

I should wish first to introduce the strange gentleman to the principal inhabitants of the town; and I must ask you for your good advice, as to whom I should invite to dine with us to-day.

Frau B. Well, let me see. I should say—

Frau S. Ah! there comes Cousin Sparrow to teach the children to strew the flowers.

Enter SPARROW, with a large nosegay. He bows profoundly; the ladies curtsey.

Spar. Honourable Widow of the late Deputy Tax-gatherer; Honourable Widow of the late Superintendent of Fisheries, your most obedient servant! I was in my garden; the Burgomaster sent the town-crier for me. I ran hither like a sunbeam; I scarcely allowed myself time to cull these sweet children of spring.

Frau S. and Frau B. (together) Then you know already?

Spar. Everything. It is, doubtless, some celebrated professor, or some learned traveller; but whether he come from Egypt or from Weimar; whether he have climbed Pompey's Pillar, or have seen Wieland looking out of his window, we have no time to lose. Here are the flowers; let the children be summoned. Then he shall see how we manage things in Krowwinkel!

Re-enter BURGOMASTER and ANNA, hastily, by different doors.

Burgo. Here he is! The street is full of people; they are running by the side of the carriage and staring at him.

Frau S. Good gracious! And no company is invited, and I am not dressed! Nicholas, if you had but left him in the stone-quarry!

[A trumpet is heard, all out of tune.]

Burgo. Come, let us meet him.

[Exeunt BURGOMASTER and SPARROW.]

ANNA is detained by the position of the elder ladies from following them.

Frau S. (curtseying) Honourable Widow of the Superintendent of Fisheries, will you have the goodness to go first?

Frau B. (curtseying) No, Honourable Widow of the Deputy Tax-gatherer, the honour belongs to you.

Frau S. Never, in my own house!

Frau B. I know my place too well.

Frau S. I will not stir a foot.

Frau B. Indeed, you must excuse me.

Frau S. I beg you, do not tempt me.

Frau B. I hear them already on the stairs.

(They fall back).

Enter OLMERS, the BURGOMASTER, and SPARROW.

Burgo. Happiness is come to all my household! Happiness to the whole town of Krowwinkel!

Olm. Not so much, sir. I shall be quite contented if my arrival gives pleasure to *one* person only (*looking at ANNA*).

Burgo. Indeed, I should like to see any loyal citizen who did not obediently rejoice.

Olm. These ladies belong to your family?

Burgo. My respected cousin Brendel, the Honourable Widow of the Superintendent of Fisheries.

Frau B. (*curtseying deeply*) I am excessively rejoiced at having the honour.

Burgo. And this is my mother, the Honourable Widow of the Deputy Tax-gatherer.

Frau S. (*also curtseying*) I beg ten thousand pardons for not having had the curtains washed. It is always done at Easter and Christmas.

Olm. Madam, I should be inconsolable if you were to disturb your accustomed arrangements for me.

Frau S. (*aside, turning up her nose*) Madam!!!

Olm. (*To the BURGOMASTER*) This young lady is your daughter?

Burgo. Every one sees her likeness to me at once.

Olm. (*to ANNA*) I flatter myself with the hope, Madam, that my presence will not cause you any inconvenience?

Anna. On the contrary, it is so agreeable to me that I could wish you had come sooner.

Frau S. It is easy to see that the girl has spent a year in Berlin.

Olm. You probably made many pleasant acquaintances there?

Anna. If not *many*, still *one*.

Olm. Who should esteem himself so much the happier.

Anna. Who knows? The people of Berlin have every good quality but that of remembering friends.

Olm. Whoever has been so happy as once to see *you*——

Anna. Oh, you are flattering a poor country girl.

Burgo. Come, come, Anna! *You*, at all events, are not a mere country girl. We live, I am thankful to say, in a flourishing town.

Frau B. The two principal streets are paved.

Spar. Five thousand inhabitants, among whom are several authors.

Frau S. A delightful promenade as far as the gallows.

Olm. I noticed some pleasant hills as I came along.

Frau B. Oh, those are excellent for drying clothes!

Olm. And the valley is picturesquely sprinkled with shrubs.

Frau S. The finest strawberries grow there.

Spar. (*bowing to ANNA*) Sweet and red as a young lady's lips!

Burgo. But above all things I must show you our old Town Hall. An

architect from Gotha built it three hundred years since. It is in the Gothic taste.

Olm. As soon as I have removed the traces of my journey, I shall be most happy.

Frau S. Anna, show the gentleman to his room.

Burgo. I will have the honour of conducting you.

Spar. And I too.

Olm. Pray do not trouble yourselves, gentlemen; I am perfectly satisfied with my guide (*gives his hand to ANNA*).

Burgo. His Excellency the Premier has himself commended you to me, and I will take care to follow you like your shadow.

[*Exeunt OLMERS and ANNA, the BURGOMASTER, and SPARROW.*]

Frau S. Now, what do you think of him, cousin?

Frau B. He is a fine man, but his hair can't have been powdered for a week.

Frau S. And he called me plain Madam! Just fancy, *Madam!* when I am the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy Tax-gatherer.

Frau B. He certainly must come to Krowwinkel to learn manners.

Frau S. My son said to him plainly enough, The Honourable Widow of His Majesty's Late Deputy Tax-gatherer, and nevertheless he called me Madam in the most shameless manner!

Frau B. He wears very nice linen.

Frau S. The man seems familiar to me. I keep thinking that I have seen him somewhere (*suddenly starts violently*). Ah! oh! I am so dizzy! I shall faint (*sinks upon a couch*).

Frau B. What is it, cousin?

Frau S. There, in my pocket.

Frau B. (*searching in FRAU STAAR'S pocket, and bringing different articles to light*) Is it your smelling-bottle?

Frau S. (*gasping*) No—no; a picture—a picture——

Frau B. Now—yes; here it is. Ah—a—ah!! see here! The stranger, as sure as I am a miserable sinner! Who is he? Who is he?

Frau S. I cannot get my breath.

Frau B. Not an escaped criminal? Their pictures are sometimes distributed——

Frau S. It is the King! it is the King!!

Frau B. (*screaming*) The King!!!

Frau S. His all-glorious Majesty!

Frau B. Cousin, cousin, I am taken worse! (*sinks upon a chair opposite FRAU STAAR; both recline in fainting attitudes*).

Frau S. (*faintly*) No; I shall never get over it—the honour—the favour—and the curtains not washed——

Frau B. (*faintly*) Does no one in the town know?

Frau S. Not a soul.

Frau B. (rising feebly) Oh, then, I must hasten—my feet feel like lead—but the King—loyalty—ah! ah! [Exit.]

Frau S. (alone) I am all astray—it does not matter—now my hour may come as soon as it pleases Heaven. Yes; now I will even be Madam—the King may call me Madam as much as he likes. Hark! there he goes to and fro overhead—one can tell at once that it is a kingly step.

Re-enter the BURGOMASTER and SPARROW.

Are you come at last? See, here I sit, and who knows whether I shall ever get up again in my life?

Burgo. What has happened to you, mother?

Frau S. (still gasping) I will be brief—I will reveal the tremendous secret. Nicholas, the King is in your house! Go on your bare knees up the stairs.

Burg. What? what?

Spar. The King!

Burgo. Do not bewilder me, mother.

Frau S. Yes, now the bewilderment will begin? All Krowwinkel will be bewildered! I tell you he is there; the great monarch of the world has condescended to visit you, Nicholas! He is in your house at this moment, you fortunate Burgomaster and Senior Alderman!

Burgo. Mother, pray explain yourself. I hardly know whether I have a head or a windmill on my shoulders.

Frau S. There! there is our gracious King's portrait; (*gives it*) now you can see for yourself—is it he or not?

Burgo. The stranger, as he lives and breathes!

Spar. Himself indeed!

Burgo. But how do you know, mother?

Frau S. Did not I see the King's grandfather forty years ago? and is not his grandson the very image of him? I tell you, it is his portrait, and his sacred person is walking overhead.

Spar. To be sure; he is travelling incognito. The father of his country in a stone-quarry!

Burgo. O heavens! what is to be done now. The trainband ought to assemble with the old trumpet.

Spar. And the volunteers with their banner.

Frau S. Oh, if my blessed husband were but alive!

Burgo. All the bells must be rung to call the burghers together.

Frau S. Cousin Brendel is already gone to spread the news.

Burgo. Then we shall have no need of the bells. But a guard of honour must be stationed before the door.

Frau S. (relapsing) Before *our* door? When I have seen a guard of honour before our door, let my last hour come.

Spar. There he is!

Frau S. (rises with difficulty) Oh, goodness me! Oh, goodness me!

Burgo. Compose yourself.

Enter OLMERS.

Olm. A most comfortable house, sir, and a charming view. (*BURGO-MASTER, SPARROW, and FRAU STAAR fall on their knees*). I hope to spend many happy hours here.

Burgo. Most gracious King——

Olm. What?

Frau S. Your kingly Majesty——

Olm. Are you making game of me?

Spar. All-glorious Monarch——

Olm. But to-day is not Twelfth-Day!

Burgo. Conceal yourself no longer from your loyal subjects. Our hearts burn——

Frau S. And blaze——

Spar. And melt; yea, boil over!

Olm. What have you on foot?

Burgo. Your Majesty's Prime Minister had already half-disclosed——

Olm. My Majesty's Prime Minister! (*aside*) I must have got into a madhouse!

Enter MAID. (She kneels.)

Maid. Two men are standing outside; they say they are a deputation from the Volunteer Corps, and want to welcome the King.

Burg. Is it your Majesty's gracious pleasure to admit them?

Olm. What is the matter with you? I am as little "your Majesty" as the watchman.

Burgo. Oh! why will your gracious Majesty longer hide yourself? We have here your invaluable portrait.

Olm. My portrait!

Frau S. (arises with difficulty and kneels before OLMERS) Here it is, great King.

Olm. Yes, this is certainly my portrait——

Burgo. At last! Then the deputation may be admitted?

Olm. You are making me a laughing-stock! My name is Albert Olmers, and nothing more.

Spar. Leave it, your worship; his Majesty wishes to remain incognito. [*Exit MAID.*]

Frau S. But your Majesty will at least not object to the guard of honour?

Olm. If you do not very soon cease, I shall most certainly want a guard, for I shall be driven crazy. (*Enter ANNA.*) Oh, it is fortunate that you are come. They want to make me a king by force—goodness knows why, for indeed I am no king. I have no desire to reign, except in one heart. If this wish is fulfilled, I envy no king. [*Exit.*]

Burgo. (*rises*) We must attend his Majesty. (*going*).

Anna. (*detaining him*) What is all this, father? Where have you got this notion?

Burgo. Silly child! it is the King.

Anna. No, indeed! Who has been imposing upon you?

Burgo. Imposing upon me! Has not your grandmother seen his grandfather?

Spar. Has she not his portrait?

Frau S. Why, she gave it me herself!

Anna. Oh, now I see! Oh, oh! that was all a joke.

The Rest. A joke!!

Anna. Forgive me, grandmother——

Frau S. I will box your ears!

Anna. How could I possibly imagine——

Frau S. You wicked girl! Then you knew whose portrait it really was?

Anna. (*hesitating*) No—no. I—I——.

Frau S. How did you come by it?

Anna. I—I found it.

Frau S. Found it! Where? How?

Anna. While I was in Berlin—one day—out walking—in some long grass. I put it in my pocket, and forgot all about it till to-day.

Frau S. Indeed! then what was the reason of the tenderness with which you were looking at it when I came into the room this morning?

Anna. Tenderness?

Frau S. Yes, tenderness; you could neither see nor hear.

Anna. Oh, I can soon explain that. There was a lost miniature advertised in the newspaper, and I remembered this one. So I took it out of my pocket to compare it with the advertisement.

Frau S. Mischievous creature! Suppose I had put the picture as an aigrette upon my cap! The whole town would have pointed at me. Take it away! Never let me see it again!

Burgo. (*magisterially*) Give it back to the stranger.

Anna. Certainly, or he——

Spar. I will make amends to you. I will have *my* picture painted.

Anna. (*aside*) Better have himself stuffed and put in a glass case!

Burgo. I must go and quiet the burghers. But I tell you, if you bring me such a King into my house again, I will have you sent to the House of Correction. [*Exit.*]

Frau S. All my happiness destroyed at one blow! Already I saw the guard of honour before the door. Already I was telling it to my blessed husband in the grave; and, meantime, my roast-beef is burnt to cinders, you abominable girl! [*Exit.*]

Anna. Honourable Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges—you, too, have probably business to attend to before dinner.

Spar. Dearest lady, before dinner and after dinner I can have no other business than to lay bare this true and loyal heart before you. Fairest Anna ! prove it ! shelter yourself in it against storm and frost !

Anna. I am still young, sir, and do not need any borrowed warmth.

Spar. Do with it as you will ! (*kneels.*) The King has disappeared, but the Queen stands before me ! Queen of my heart ! my soul's divinity !

Enter OLMERS.

Olm. (starting) I beg pardon for interrupting so pleasant an interview.

[*Sparrow gets up.*]

Anna. It does not in the least matter. Pray come in.

Olm. Not matter ! Most people would think it mattered very much.

Spar. To be sure. You must know, sir, that after an eternity of two years, true love has at last conquered.

Olm. Indeed ! I congratulate you.

Spar. If you remain here a few weeks, you will be present at a festival in which Cupid and Hymen affectionately clasp hands.

Olm. Really !

Anna. Yes, sir ; I hope so with my whole heart. Though I am not yet betrothed, yet I trust that I soon shall be.

Olm. Not yet betrothed ? Surely you jest.

Anna. Understand me rightly, sir. For *full five weeks* I have hoped that my lover would come forward, but he was silent.

Spar. Good heavens ! Did not my eyes speak plainly ?

Olm. (beginning to understand) Perhaps he was silent in order to prepare everything beforehand.

Spar. You are right, sir. My future dwelling is still in building.

Anna. But he could have communicated with me in writing, through a third person.

Spar. Did I not daily lay myself at your feet ?

Olm. Perhaps he scrupulously obeyed a stringent prohibition which decorum had laid upon him.

Spar. Exactly so. When my honoured lady went to Berlin she strictly forbade me to send my sighs through the post.

Olm. Perhaps he thought, too, that when his affection and constancy had been put to so many proofs, he might safely count upon generous trust in return.

Anna. You think, then, Herr Olmers, that my lover still feels as warmly to me as formerly ?

Spar. Only *warm* ? boiling hot ! Yes, lady, had Archimedes known such love, he would not have needed the burning-glass to set fire to the enemy's fleet.

Olm. I would venture to say that his love grew even greater during separation.

Spar. True, true. When she was in Berlin I was almost raving.

Anna. Now I am satisfied.

Spar. At last !

Olm. And so am I.

Spar. You are a most obliging man, to interest yourself so warmly in my concerns. I beg you to grant me your friendship.

Olm. (*bowing slightly*) Your obedient servant.

Anna. Well ! in the presence of this gentleman I vow eternal love !

Olm. I will receive the vow in the name of the beloved.

Spar. Ah ! how touching !

Anna. No power shall part me from him.

Olm. He is for ever bound to thee.

Spar. Now does joy penetrate the inmost recesses of my soul.

Enter FRAU STAAR.

Frau. S. The dinner is ready. (*To OLMERS*) May I venture to——

Olm. I am quite at your service. (*gives his hand to ANNA behind SPARROW'S back, and exeunt ANNA and OLMERS.*)

Spar. (*putting on his white gloves*) Now will I in triumph with the hand of my love—(*turns gallantly to give her his hand, and finds himself face to face with the grandmother*).

Frau S. (*curtseying*) Honourable Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges——

Spar. (*stammering*) Honourable Widow of His Majesty's Deputy Tax-gatherer——

[*She offers him the tips of her fingers, and exeunt, he trying to look amiable.*]

END OF FIRST SCENE.

SCENE II. THE SAME.

Enter FRAU STAAR and FRAU BRENDL.

Frau S. Cousin ! what an ill-mannered man our guest is !

Frau B. He let half the dishes pass him !

Frau S. And I told him well enough what they were made of, and how good they all were.

Frau B. He can never have been accustomed to good society ; he did not even praise the trifle, and it was really delicious : it melted in one's mouth.

Frau S. Oh, you flatter me !

Frau B. May I ask how many eggs you put in it ?

Frau S. I will have the honour of repeating the whole receipt to you. Take first——

Enter SPARROW, leading ANNA.

Spar. Really, cousins, this stranger is much to be pitied. He seems to have no taste for poetry or belles lettres.

Frau S. Come, now, Anna, tell us, are all the young men of Berlin like this Olmers?

Anna. All who lay claim to anything like good breeding.

Frau S. Good breeding! why, he has no manners at all!

Spar. He despises poetry——

Frau B. Never praises the cookery——

Frau S. Never gives anyone their proper title——

Frau B. Leaves half his dinner on the plate——

Frau S. Did not listen to a word your father said.

Anna. Oh dear, oh dear! Unfortunate Herr Olmers! Why, grandmother, in Berlin everyone aims at doing away with constraint as much as possible. People let their guests eat what they like and as much as they like, without teasing them by pressing. Formal titles are only used officially; never in private life.

Frau S. Have done, have done! or I shall faint again.

Enter the BURGOMASTER and OLMERS.

Burgo. As I was saying, sir, the city herds have for a hundred years had the privilege of pasturing on the stubble of the Rummelsburger. But the lord of the manor has lately seized a fat sheep——

Olm. (aside to ANNA) My pretty young hostess slipped away from me.

Burgo. A sheep, I say, he has seized——

Olm. (as before) Although housewifely cares become you well——

Burgo. A fat sheep, I say——

Anna. (aside to OLMERS) Attend to the fat sheep!

Olm. Say no more, sir; I am perfectly satisfied as to the privileges of your city herds. The lord of the manor must return the sheep.

Burgo. But that is not enough——

Olm. And pay whatever damages you think proper. (*To FRAU STAAR*) Is it not so, Madam? You have entertained us so well, that just at present we are hardly in a humour to be interested in the fattest sheep.

Frau S. It certainly appears, sir, that *sensible* subjects of conversation do not interest every one. [*Curtseys stiffly, and exit.*]

Olm. I hope, Madam, that I have not offended you?

Spar. The Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy-Tax-gatherer is too highly respected throughout Krowwinkel to be offended when this or that chance-comer omits to give her her accustomed title.

Olm. But country titles are so long and so difficult to remember.

Spar. Particularly to a man who has no title himself. [*Exit.*]

Olm. Such punctilios should be banished when people meet to enjoy themselves.

Frau B. People should have regard to the rank of the guests.

[*Curtseys, and exit.*

Burgo. (aside, settling his wig) If it were not for the Premier, I should tell him so myself.

Anna. (aside to OLMERS) You are going the right way to get into hot water with the whole family. Speak to my father before it is too late.

[*Exit ANNA.*

Burgo. To return to the aforesaid sheep.

Olm. Oh sir, if you promised me all the sheep in Thibet, there would still be one wish unfulfilled which is nearer my heart. I love your daughter Anna——

Burgo. Ho !

Olm. And I wish for your permission to make her my wife.

Burgo. You are very kind, I am sure.

Olm. I have good means, and through the kindness of the Prime Minister I hope soon to be appointed to an important office.

Burgo. I congratulate you.

Olm. Only your consent is wanting to my happiness. May I reckon upon it ? I have made my offer as an honourable man should, in plain words, and I trust you will answer me in the same manner.

Burgo. Certainly ; but my duty obliges me to call my whole household together, and to lay your offer before them in suitable terms.

Olm. Do-so, then. I will go into the garden meanwhile, and await your decision with impatience.

Burgo. (alone) Well ! The man certainly has jumped headlong into the business. Is *that* the way to set about a marriage ? Does not he know that a man ought to go to and fro, in and out of a house, for at least six months before coming to the point ? (*goes to the door and calls*) Margaret ! run this moment to my mother and my cousin Brendel, and beg them to come hither at once, as I have something of importance to say to them (*returns*). Ah ! if it had not been for the Premier, I would have sent him about his business on the spot. Such an offhand way of speaking ! Had the fellow no sense of propriety ?

Enter FRAU STAAR and FRAU BRENDL.

Frau B. Here we are, at your Worship's service.

Frau S. What is it you want, my son ?

Burgo. A family affair needs discussion. Therefore I have called my dear relations together. First let us arrange ourselves, in order to proceed with fitting ceremony. My mother, as head of the family, shall take the seat of honour ; my cousin, as our guest, beside her ; I myself will sit opposite. So (*they sit*). It is well known to you that the Honourable Deputy Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges wishes to make my daughter Anna his wife.

Frau S. We know it. Proceed, son Nicholas.

Burgo. It appears, nevertheless, that another gentleman has come forward, who entertains similar intentions.

Both Ladies. Who? who?

Burgo. It is he whom His Excellency, our ever-to-be-honoured Prime Minister, has so strongly recommended to my kindness—Herr Olmers.

Frau S. (*drawing herself up*) *He!*

Frau B. Well, to be sure!

[*A solemn pause.*]

Burgo. What do my dear relations think, after due reflection on the matter?

Frau S. I know very well what *I* think.

Frau B. Those lovers from Berlin are never any good. We have had experience of it.

Frau S. Quite right, cousin. There was the town clerk's daughter.

Frau B. Such doings as there were when she married a newspaper correspondent, and now she is living on charity, as one may say.

Frau S. What else could be expected? Things get dearer every day. Butter was a penny a pound more last Saturday.

Burgo. But to return to my Anna.

Frau S. How can you think twice of such a thing, Nicholas? The man is of no family.

Frau B. We do not even know whether to address him as "Honourable" or "Worshipful."

Frau S. And he knows nothing of good manners—never addresses anyone by their title.

Frau B. Even laughs at us for doing so.

Frau S. I only wonder how you can have forgotten the chief objection, Nicholas. This Olmers is nobody, not even a clerk. Only think of it! The daughter of a Burgomaster and Senior Alderman! The grand-daughter of a Deputy Tax-gatherer. He is a great deal too aspiring.

Burgo. Then the conclusion of this assembly is —

Frau S. That he shall not have her!

Burgo. That is my opinion too. It now only remains for me to insinuate this to him in the most delicate manner; for, out of respect to His Excellency the Prime Minister, it ought to be managed with the greatest possible care.

Frau S. If he were invited to dine here every day, he ought to be quite satisfied.

Burgo. That would be something, certainly.

Frau S. Or he might be asked to stand godfather at the next christening which takes place in the family.

Burgo. That deserves consideration.

Frau B. How would it be to propose another wife to him?

Frau S. Yes; but whom?

Frau B. Your Ursula. She is nearly nine years old. He can wait.

Burgo. Suppose he will not wait? When a young man once takes it

into his head to marry, he will not rest till he has done it. I should prefer to offer him a bride of more matured beauty. Our cousin here, the Honourable Widow of the Superintendent of Fisheries.

Frau B. (bashfully) Oh, you are only joking.

Frau S. She has been a widow nearly eight months.

Frau B. Nearly nine months, honoured cousin—nearly nine months.

Burgo. She has good means, and can buy him a title. They are very cheap. And he is a fine-looking man.

Frau B. Yes, he is fine-looking; everyone must allow that.

Burgo. Well, how would it be, cousin?

Frau B. (hiding her face with her fan) Oh, let it be as Heaven directs.

Enter OLMERS.

Olm. Forgive the impatience of a lover. I see you are assembled—perhaps my fate is already decided. May I flatter myself with the hope of soon becoming one of this circle?

Burgo. (puzzled and stammering) Yes, yes. His Excellency the Premier has so earnestly recommended you to us—if certain wishes were not fulfilled exactly in the manner proposed—

Frau S. There would still be a means—

Burgo. The family is large, Heaven be thanked!

Olm. What am I to suppose from these broken sentences?

Burgo. My mother is the head of the family: it is for her to speak first.

Olm. I expect my fate from your lips, madam.

Frau S. No, sir, the "madam" has nothing to say here. *You* speak, my son; you know my thoughts. *[Exit.*

Olm. Oh, be quick, sir! Leave me no longer in this suspense.

Burgo. A delicate task. Matrimony and needlework are ladies' affairs, so pray address yourself to my honourable cousin.

Olm. Will *you*, madam, be kind enough to explain—

Frau B. The family propose—they think to compensate for your disappointment—they are advised—they discussed a plan—but you must feel, sir, that it would be unfitting for a young lady to enter upon anything of the sort, when she has been only *ten* months a widow.

[Exit, curtseying.]

Olm. (alone) What the deuce does all this mean? How utterly unfitted for this kind of thing a man is, when he has lived all his life in a large city. If some chance takes him to a little country town, he stands there like an owl in the daylight—the crows flutter round him and chatter and scold the poor stranger!

END OF SECOND SCENE.

SCENE III. THE SAME—NIGHT.

OLMERS discovered alone.

Olm. Heaven be thanked that people go to bed early in these little towns. I have not been my own master for one minute to-day. They questioned, they complimented, they chattered incessantly—wanted to know everything, and knew everything better already. They never leave their “dear guest” to himself for one instant. He has to eat without being hungry, drink without being thirsty, sit down without being tired: see all their sights, hear all their town-gossip, and praise and compliment everything. I would bear it willingly to win my Anna, but not a glimmer of hope cheers me. I have not even had one *tete-à-tete* with her to enliven this dreadful constraint. She promised to come down here when everyone was gone to bed. I wonder if she will keep her word.

Enter ANNA.

Olm. At last, my dearest ! At last we are alone, and I can say to you again from the bottom of my heart——

Anna. Oh, you are all just the same. A lover never finds time enough to say his thousand little speeches a thousand times over. A husband, on the contrary, might chatter the whole day long, but he only walks about the room and grumbles.

Olm. I hope——

Anna. That *you* will not do so ? Well, so do I. But it is true, for all that. Lovers and larks only sing in the spring, and one may be very glad if they do not fly away altogether in the autumn.

Olm. I vow to you——

Anna. Hush ! Everyone in the house is still awake. I slipped down without my shoes ; but my grandmother was still singing her evening hymn—there was a light under my father's door—and I could hear Sparrow pacing to and fro in his attic.—He sleeps here to-night, you know, in preparation for to-morrow—that dreadful to-morrow !

Olm. What is to be done ? I cannot in the least make out whether your father meant to consent or not.

Anna. To refuse, I fear. I told you you would get into hot water. What evil fate instigated you to call my grandmother “madam ?” She is the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy-Tax-gatherer : remember that !

Olm. Very well ; she shall hear it often enough to-morrow.

Anna. And why did not you eat anything at supper ?

Olm. Because I had been obliged to eat so much at dinner that I was not hungry.

Anna. All the same. He is a very lukewarm lover who will not run the risk of an indigestion for the sake of his lady.

Olm. I will be a complete gourmand to-morrow.

Anna. And why did you yawn so much when my father was relating his long law-suit to you?

Olm. Just because it *was* so long.

Anna. That makes no difference. But with all your efforts, you want the principal thing yet.

Olm. What's that?

Anna. A title, Albert! No one can get on in Krowwinkel without a title. Here it is not asked, Has he good sense, or merit? but What title has he? A man who cannot put from twelve to fifteen syllables after his name must not open his mouth in company. And my grandmother would never consent that the clergyman who published the banns should have nothing longer to say than "the bridegroom is Herr Albert Olmers."

Olm. Is that all? But suppose, though, that I have already acquired a very pretty little title of my own?

Anna. Have you? Then, now all our difficulties are out of the way. But why in the world could not you say so before?

Olm. I didn't know——

Anna. Oh, but you *ought* to have known. Do you suppose, then, that the title-disease only prevails in this part of the country? C'est partout comme chez nous—— Hush! I hear a noise. (*clings to OLMERS as if frightened*).

Klaus, the Constable. (outside) Hey! Hollo! Hey! Oh, I am a miserable man! Hollo! hollo! Will nobody wake? (*knocks loudly*) Oh, it will be the death of me! Hey! Hollo!

Burgo. (outside) Who knocks so late?

Klaus. Open the door. The State is in danger!

Burgo. Klaus, is it you? What do you want?

Klaus. Oh, your worship! I am a dead man.

Burgo. What's amiss?

Klaus. The prisoner who stole the cow!

Burgo. Well?

Klaus. She has escaped!!

Burgo. What!!!

Klaus. She has fled across the mountains!

Burgo. Heaven forbid!

Klaus. My character! my credit! my perquisites! I will drown myself in the moat!

Burgo. Silence, Klaus! silence! The affair must be managed quietly. Wait a little; I will come down and let you in.

Klaus. Unfortunate man that I am! who will stand in the pillory to-morrow? Not a man in the whole town will help me in my need.

[*The BURGOMASTER is heard unfastening the door.*]

Anna. They are coming in here! Quick! hide yourself.

[*OLMERS and ANNA hide behind a curtain.*]

Enter the BURGOMASTER and KLAUS.

Burgo. Now, Klaus, let the terrible event be formally reported.

Klaus. Your worship must know, then, that every evening I take the prisoner half a pound of bread and a jug of water from the town moat for her supper. Well, I did so to-night. She was all right then, and in good spirits. Her handcuffs were fast, and I wished her joy of her festival to-morrow, shut the door, locked it, and went to bed. In about an hour's time my wife poked me in the side with her elbow, and said, "Listen, what a noise the cats are making!" "What cats?" said I, wondering, for they have been forbidden to appear in the Town Hall ever since a cat most disrespectfully placed her kittens in the Burgomaster's chair—

Burgo. Get on! will you?

Klaus. Well, I listened—I wondered—I may have waited half an hour—

Burgo. Too long, Klaus, too long!

Klaus. At last I got up—lighted my lantern, unlocked the door, and put in my head. You might have knocked me down with a feather; the nest was empty, and the bird was flown!

Burgo. By the aid of witchcraft—riding on a broomstick!

Klaus. She had taken off her handcuffs, broken through the wall, got into my bacon-room, and carried off a ham and three sausages, and she's off.

Burgo. A witch! She must be burnt! I will make a report to the Council—the Head Forest-master must send wood from the royal forests for the funeral pile.

Klaus. Yes, if we had got her.

Burgo. (*pathetically*) Nine long years have I toiled and moiled—the deeds have grown to a heap as high as the room—to-morrow the great day was at last to have arrived when I should enjoy the fruit of my labours. All Krowwinkel awaited the festive hour with anxious expectation; already the pillory was erected to add to the honours and fame of the illustrious Town Council—and now! my hopes have vanished like a soap-bubble! (*Takes out his pocket handkerchief*).

Klaus. My character! my perquisites! my ham!

Burgo. (*recovering himself*) Is there no means of discovering whether another hand aided in her escape?

Klaus. No, your worship; it was no Christian that helped her. The woman followed the army to Lorraine in the last war; she must have learnt the black art there. Oh, the witch! she spoke like a lady born, and she used to read the whole day long.

Burgo. Hark ye, Klaus; don't you know of anyone among our loyal citizens who out of patriotism, and for the honour of our noble city, would take the wretch's place in the pillory to-morrow?

Klaus. No one would do it, your worship. They all want to see the

sight ; but when it comes to anyone getting in himself for the good of the State, nobody is at home.

Spar. (outside) Who murmurs ? Who whispers ? Who mutters ? Who growls ?

Burgo. There now ! all the fools in Krowwinkel will hear of it !

Spar. (as before) What do I hear ? and what can I suppose ?

Burgo. (calling) If you have a pair of legs of your own, you had better come down and see.

Spar. (as before) Has my bride eloped ? Then I come on the wings of the wind !

Enter SPARROW, hurriedly.

Here I am ! here I am ! Who has carried her off ? (*changes his tone*) Oh, I perceive already, know already, understand already — it was Olmers !

Burgo. Are you crazy ? Who is talking of my daughter ? The prisoner has escaped !

Spar. The prisoner !!

Klaus. With my ham and sausages !

Spar. Good heavens ! what do I hear ? What do I understand ? No festival to-morrow, no pillory, no betrothal ! What will become of my poems ? I have written a sonnet upon the prisoner, and a triolett upon the three beams of the gallows !

Burgo. What is to be done ? What will they say in Berlin ?

Spar. The Prime Minister will be beside himself.

Burgo. And the King will never pardon it.

Spar. Your worship is certain to be deprived of your office.

Burgo. Alas ! alas !

Klaus. A-a-ah ! don't your worships see ? There behind the curtain—something moves ! It is the prisoner !

Burgo. and Spar. What ? What do you say ?

Klaus. And her familiar spirit with her !! O ! O ! O !

[*All retreat to a safe distance.*

Burgo. Come out ! come out ! you impious creature !

Spar. Fetch her out, Klaus. I command you.

Klaus. Never, never ! I can see his horns. Who knows what might happen to me ?

(*They retreat still further.*

Spar. No evil can befall an honest man.

Klaus. (retiring behind the other two) If your worship would go first. I am your servant ; my place is to keep behind you.

Burgo. Klaus, you presume. It is not for you to point out the line of action proper for me to pursue (*goes behind SPARROW, who instantly tries to go behind him again*). And let me tell you, it does not become the Burgomaster and Senior Alderman of the City of Krowwinkel to have

any connection with supernatural agencies beyond occasionally ordering a witch to be burnt.

Spar. Nevertheless, I recommend you to make the capture with your own hands, for your bravery in doing so would assuredly avert the unpleasant consequences of the King's indignation at her escape.

Burgo. Here, Sparrow, you prove your bravery ! Win my daughter by an act of daring which would immortalise you in the hearts of the people of Krowwinkel. You will immediately be created President of the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Spar. What ! win honour and fame by commerce with the Evil One ? Never ! Not even for the sake of that magnificent title will I sully my hands by touching a witch.

Klaus. Oh, do, sir ! Honourable and kind-hearted Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges !

Spar. (retreating) Forbear, Klaus ! I am proof against all persuasion. I will not, even to win my bride, have dealings in sorcery. Don't you smell the brimstone now ? (*gets behind the others*).

Burgo. Klaus, I order you to seize her.

Klaus. (retreating) O, your worship ! please, your worship !

Spar. Klaus, don't you hear his worship's orders ?

Klaus. Have pity on an old man, that has borne a good character all his life.

Burgo. (going behind KLAUS) Sparrow, cannot you exorcise the demons ?

Klaus. I never harmed a creature in all my born days.

[*They push KLAUS forward. He at last plucks up courage and pulls out ANNA by the arm.*]

Anna. (kneels) Oh, father !

Burgo. Why,—Anna ! !

Olm. (coming forward) Worshipful Burgomaster—

Burgo. How did you get there ? What were you after there ?

Anna. You should have known all to-morrow, father, but circumstances have altered our plans. I love Olmers, and I abhor Sparrow.

Spar. Barbarian !

Anna. Olmers has good means ; he has a title, and is a schoolfellow of the Premier.

Olm. (raising her and retaining her hand) And would think himself most fortunate if he could arrange matters at Court in reference to the unpleasant affair of which he has just become cognizant. For it is not to be denied that it may have important consequences.

Burgo. (anxiously). Do you really think so ?

Olm. Your worship will certainly be superseded in your position.

Burgo. (horrified) Really !

Olm. But I will take everything upon myself, and answer for it that you shall receive lenient treatment.

Spar. I advise you, I recommend you, worshipful Burgomaster, let him have the girl, for no one else will now. Certainly, I won't.

Burgo. Yes, if it only depended on me—as things wear such an unpleasant aspect—but the grandmother——

Anna. He has a title.

Burgo. Has he, really?

Frau S. (outside) Are there any ghosts abroad to-night? What are you making such a noise for, downstairs?

Burgo. Come down, mother; we're going to have a betrothal.

Frau S. (outside) In the middle of the night? Don't talk nonsense, Nicholas.

Burgo. (to OLMERS) I must stipulate, though, that this affair about the prison must be concluded before the wedding can be thought of.

Olm. I will answer for everything.

Enter FRAU STAAR.

Frau S. Now then, Honourable Deputy-Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges, what sort of a romance are you setting about now?

Burgo. (Interrupting) Herr Olmers wants to marry Anna, and Anna is bent upon having him.

Frau S. And that is all you prevent me getting to bed for? Did I not speak my mind plainly enough about that in broad daylight? I won't have anything to do with it.

Burgo. But so much has happened since then——

Frau S. What does that matter to me?

Burgo. The gentleman can help us in a great difficulty.

Frau S. Let him!

Burgo. The girl was hidden behind the curtains with him.

Frau S. So much the worse!

Burgo. She will never get a husband now.

Frau S. Then she may die an old maid.

Burgo. The gentleman has money.

Frau S. Well, what more?

Burgo. And merit.

Frau S. Anything more?

Burgo. And he has also an exalted title.

Frau S. A title, has he? and what sort of a title may that be, pray?

Olm. (taking out his pocket-book) If the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy Tax-gatherer will have the goodness to cast an eye upon this paper, I flatter myself that she will find, according to the well-known excellent understanding for which the whole world celebrates the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy-Tax-gatherer——

Frau S. (softening) Well, well, well ; at all events, he is a very courteous gentleman. What kind of title have you, then?

Olm. Private Secretary to the President of the Honourable Privy Council.

Frau S. Private Secretary to the President of the Privy Council ! Oh, oh ! that is quite another thing. There has never been anything Private in our family before. Yes ; if that is so, and the Right Honourable Private Secretary to the President of the Privy Council will do our house the honour of allying himself with it—(*curtseys.*)

Olm. (bowing) My happiness rests entirely in the hands of the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy-Tax-gatherer.

Frau S. (curtseying) The Right Honourable Private Secretary of the President of the Privy Council may depend upon me.

Burgo. Come into my counting-house : we will sign the contract.

Olm. May I have the honour of offering my hand to the Honourable Widow of His Majesty's late Deputy Tax-gatherer?

Frau S. The Right Honourable Private Secretary to the President of the Privy Council is a model of courtesy.

[*Exeunt OLMERS and FRAU STAAR, he leading her by the hand.*]

Burgo. (to Sparrow) Do not take this ill of me. A patriot must always be ready to sacrifice his daughter to the interests of the State. (*takes ANNA'S hand ; she lingers.*)

Spar. Your humble servant.

Anna. Honourable Deputy Sub-Inspector of Roads and Bridges, I invite you to the wedding. (*She bows deeply.*)

[*Exeunt ANNA and BURGOMASTER.*]

Spar. Wait a little ! I will write a sonnet to you at once, an ode, an epithalamium !

Klaus. (coming forward). Who knows, now, under what hedge that woman may be sitting, feasting on my sausages?

Spar. Klaus, come to my room with me. I will read you my triolett on the Gallows.

Klaus. Get along with your trios ; find me my ham and sausages !

[*Exit.*]

Spar. (alone) I cannot have written it quite in vain ! If only the watchman would come by, I would call him in. (*To the audience, with the sweetest courtesy*) Is there no one who will take the trouble to listen to my Triolett?

FINIS.

A DASH FOR LIFE.

I WAS out in — during the wild times that they had there a number of years ago. There must, I think, have been five or six hundred of us in and about S—. We were surrounded on all sides by bush-rangers. Outrages of every possible kind were of daily occurrence, and many a brave fellow met his death in attempting, with others, to break up the camps of these daring outlaws. Did I come near losing my life, you ask? Yes, more than once. And I particularly recall one time of which I will tell you.

We had a small, resolute company of men under us, made desperate by repeated wrongs, and they hardly cared what they did or what risks they ran, in trying to exterminate those fierce bushrangers.

Almost every movement of ours was watched; but Sheldric Day, our captain, was as keen as the sharpest of the outlaws. So when an old farmer came in with his waggon filled with green-stuff and covered with straw, Day watched his chance and succeeded in starting him homeward with a load of rifles under the straw.

Toward nightfall one man straggled off, whistling in one direction, with his hands in his pockets; another went another way; another, another; and so on. Our rendezvous was Dury's Forks, a lonely track of country, where the roads branched off in many directions.

When we had once got fairly beyond the limits haunted by spies, we mended our pace, and the men were soon coming in from all directions upon the run, ready to seize their weapons and go whither Captain Day might lead.

Shaping our course in a south-westerly direction, we made what speed the tall, tangled, bothersome prairie-grass would allow, and crept on stealthily. The camp of the bushrangers was at supper; we surprised it, and a fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. The fellows were finally routed; but somehow I became separated from the rest, and two or three of the ruffians, discovering my situation, bore down upon me. In spite of my frantic efforts, they captured me, and bore me with them on the retreat. My company probably did not at first discover my absence, as it was quite dark, and so I was left to the mercies of a gang of cut-throats.

With no delicate touch they seized upon me, securely bound my hands, and advised me, with the cold lips of a revolver, to keep quiet. They then dashed away towards a village some miles distant, where their headquarters were, or rather where the prison was located.

Without a word, I was thrust into a damp, dark, underground apartment, whose only aperture for light and air was a grated

hole which just rose above the ground level. I gathered myself up, and looked my situation in the face. I knew these outlaws well. I had nothing to expect but to be dragged forth during the night, and hanged upon the first projection which offered sufficient support for my weight. I was too well known as first lieutenant of the K—Regulars to hope for mercy. My companions would doubtless think that I had fallen, and leave me to my fate.

Worn out with hard work and care, I fell asleep—though I have often wondered since at it. From which delightful rest I was awakened by a soft, rasping noise close by.

"Rats," I mentally commented, and turned over.

"Hist," said a voice at the window, or the grated opening that served for one. "Are you awake?"

"Awake, and more than awake," I answered, and immediately brought my face to the aperture.

"Be quiet," said the voice. "Their guard is pacing not ten yards from here, but the darkness is favourable. Get this iron bar between the rods and wrench carefully towards you. I have straightened out the ends, that were clenched upon this side." Carefully seizing upon the iron bar thrust into me, I inserted the end under the first rod, and gradually started it.

"Hist! "the guard is coming this way; wait until he returns to the front," breathed my helper. "Hist!" The guard clanked by, starting the sweat from every pore of my body; for I expected him to stumble upon my friend and deliverer outside.

"Be quick," resumed the voice at the grating again. "He will return in just twenty minutes, for I have marked his beats; and—quick.

One after the other, each of the bars was dropped from its place; and then, by reaching my hands out through the aperture, and by dint of using my shoeless feet against the wall, I struggled, and was drawn through. Fortunately, I was slim and slight; a large man must have hopelessly strangled himself. Not too soon, either; for the guard turned the corner at the moment and came towards us. We crouched behind in the shade of the projecting wall.

He heard nothing; saw nothing; paced his beat, and went back. Once out of sight, be very sure we did not lose time. Springing up, and catching by the top of the high fence, we swung ourselves outside.

"The only thing that I could get," said Davis, leading me to an old mule, and cautioning me in a whisper to beware of the vicious old animal's heels. "Now, look sharp; don't take the Red Forks, mind you, nor the main route that leads to the court-house. There are four roads by the Live Oaks, all running west; you know them; be sure don't take the third one, that leads right into the camp of the outlaws, but the fourth takes you down among our boys—the Regs. Mind well my directions, and ride softly, while I try to take up the attention of the sentinel."

I mounted in a heterogeneous manner, the old mule refusing to remain sufficiently stationary for me to seat myself according to the fashions of civilization.

Ride softly ! Davis must have been joking. For the heels of that vicious brute beat the sod as though he were a drum-major beating the devil's tattoo, and with considerable more force and effect. But at last I persuaded him with my heels to move on, not until I had heard the sentinel brawling with Davis, who was personating a drunken man with great zeal and eminent success.

I got out of the place as soon as the stiff knees of my fine animal would let me : but somehow or other I became confused as to Davis's directions.

The stars broke out through the clouds; and so I passed the Red Forks, and the main route leading to the court-house safely ; but when I came to the Live Oaks—there I was out ; and unconsciously too. To this day I don't know how it happened. I certainly avoided the third road as I believed ; instead of which I turned into it. There, deeming myself safe, I relaxed my vigilance, and pictured our men's surprise when I should ride up to them. Three quarters of a mile off, I could see their camp fire glaring. I did not shout or apprise them in any way of my coming ; they were for the most part asleep ; but went quietly on. When close up, I dashed quickly on : and—dashed right into the camp of bushrangers : some of whom had carried me to prison but a few hours before.

Picture my position ! Had I possessed a good horse, I should have made a rush for it, while they were petrified with amazement ; but my treacherous old beast now refused to move forward or back. Just then, couldn't I have shouted with Richard, " My kingdom for a horse ! " Well, they had me, more's the pity, seeing that nearly all of them were drunk, and the rest unsteady in their joints. Maybe they made me the butt of a few thick jokes as they pulled me from the old mule's back, and bound my hands, making the rope fast to a stump, and setting a thick, rough fellow to guard me. I was half palsied by the mistake I had made, and offered no resistance. No doubt that much was in my favour.

Time passed. Ere long my guard began to snore. I then cautiously worked my hands, and found, to my joy, that I could strain upon the knots and slip my hands through. This I did. Next I made some slight movements to try my chance ; and I found they did not arouse the sentinel.

The fire was dying down to a flickering shade, and I knew that it must be within an hour or two of daylight. I crawled past my guard ; he did not stir ; and keeping well in the shadow, I made for the horses of the party. When close up to them, I cautiously rose up-right and snatched up a picket-pin, seized the halter, and vaulted upon

the back of a powerful horse. He seemed docile enough : but the moving him out from amid the others made *them* uneasy. They stamped, and pawed, and neighed ; and when, with a rap of my heel as a spur, we dashed for the cover of the woods, the disturbance made by these treacherous animals alarmed the camp.

I was in for it now. Life or death depended upon the events of the next fifteen minutes. I dashed into the thick, tangled woods. Utter darkness reigned. In five minutes I was unhorsed, but holding to the halter, I leaped on again, and madly dashed forward to life or to death.

What a ride that was ! Without bridle or saddle, dashing full tilt against the wild-grape vines everywhere strung across the way, went I. Once they caught me under the chin and swept me off over the horse's back into the brush, with the perspiration oozing from every pore.

I scrambled out and mounted again. It was a good horse, but a dangerous way. Now a dead branch would catch the corner of my mouth, and now something would come in contact with my eyes, making them sparkle again.

But I escaped. The very dangers which beset my path saved me. The half-drunken rangers lacked spirit to pursue their escaped captive.

I got through that seventeen miles' ride somehow, coming out scratched and bleeding, but alive. Out on the plains, some five miles from L—, I ran upon the remains of a mule-train that had been bringing us provisions. The drivers lay around murdered, the carts were plundered and broken, and one boy of fourteen, with his scalp clean gone, lay on the ground, yet alive. I got him up before me, for how could I leave him there, and still carried him into S—. Talk of frontier life ! Its wild, reckless excitement may have charms for some men ; but they must encounter dangers.

"But did the boy live, Captain ?"

"Bob ? Oh, yes, and afterwards became a soldier too, and fought against the Indians."

"Without his scalp ?"

"Yes, and thereby escaped much trouble, you understand. Pass the cigars."



THE MILLER OF MANNEVILLE.

BY JULIA KAVANAGH.

THE little brackish river which flows through Manneville turns the wheel of many a Norman mill on its way. There is the big mill for the grinding of rape, and which is to become oil in time ; there is the tucking mill, which dyes the river black and blue at certain hours ; and there is the flour mill, which belongs to Maitre Salomon, and is so picturesque, so green and so lovely, that it is a wonder no painter has found it out as yet.

The river of Manneville is nameless. It springs in a little hollow not far from the road to Fontaine, flows round the village for a mile or so, then glides away with a low, plaintive murmur to the sea. Perhaps because its course is so brief, perhaps because it is so soon lost in the great blue waters, it has been allowed to pass through the world without a name. Was it worth while to give any to so short-lived a stream ? On one, too, which, being the only river for miles around, could never be mistaken for any other. So the river of Manneville is born, goes one its way, does its good work, and dies unrecorded.

Not far from the dark spot whence it murmurs forth into the bright sunshine, it suddenly spreads into a little lake, skirted with hoary willows and tall beech trees, that cast a deep cool shade on its waters. An old dyke closes one extremity of the lake, and ends in Maitre Salomon's mill. Beyond the dyke the lake narrows, and becoming river-like, flows on in the green, fresh shade of fine old trees, till it reaches the village.

But of Manneville, of its street, church, and houses, there is neither sight or sound here. The gray old mill, and its pleasant stone house and smiling orchard, ending in a gay flower-garden, are all you see if you go down to the lake from the road leading to Fontaine. The picture is one you never forget, especially if the wheel of the mill be still. Wherever you look you see green trees, clear water, and blue sky, and, closing the scene, the old mill, seeming to sleep in the sun as if it were weary of its endless work, and glad to doze its last days away.

It is not a busy mill. It has had little corn to grind since the windmill was built on the hill by Fontaine ; but Maitre Salomon keeps it going ; he will not give in to the windmill ; he hates it, talks of it with cool scorn, and, being a well-to-do man, he can indulge in his hobby—his own mill. He likes that mill for many reasons. His mother was born here, here she was married, and here she died when he was a lad

of fourteen. Maitre Salomon himself was born at the mill on a mid-summer morning, and he is apt to boast that he has never been twenty-four entire hours out of it since that day. Even as the Celestial Empire is the centre of the world to the Chinese, so is his mill the centre of Manneville to Maitre Salomon.

Midsummer morning was beautiful and balmy three years ago, and so thought the miller, who was smoking in his orchard, looking at the shadow of the apple trees on the grass, and at the clear sheet of water which rippled gently on the sandy beach at his feet. "I am twenty-nine to-day," he soliloquised. "Well, it is pleasant to live, especially here in the old mill." The young miller did not go beyond this satisfactory conclusion; perhaps because a thrush was singing very sweetly above his head; perhaps, too, because he rarely vexed his mind with useless speculations. He was a tall young Norman, fair and florid, with happy blue eyes, and a look of calm content on his handsome, good-humoured face which his daily life fulfilled. It was the boast of his cousin and servant, Catherine, that she could do what she pleased with Maitre Salomon, provided she did not disturb his equanimity by speaking of the hateful windmill.

"My dear mother has been dead fifteen years," thought the miller, as a faint sound of church bells came on the summer air. "God rest her soul. She was a good mother to me." And he sighed with the calm sorrow with which we learn to think of the dead.

"Maitre Salomon," called out a shrill voice from the house, "will you not go to High Mass to-day?"

"I have been to low mass," answered the miller, taking out his pipe.

Catherine was deaf, but taking her master's reply for granted, she pursued, "This is a great holiday. You should go to High Mass, Maitre Salomon."

"I sleep through the sermon," answered the young man, with a cloud on his open face, "and my dear mother used to say, 'Never give scandal in God's church.' And she spoke truly, Catherine; she spoke truly."

But Catherine, who, though deaf, seemed to know all her master's answers by heart, screamed from the house, "And I say you give scandal by staying at home, Maitre Salomon; you give scandal."

This was no doubt unanswerable, for the miller extinguished his pipe, put it in his pocket, and shunning the kitchen, entered the house by a side door, and gently went up stairs to his mother's room. It had never been used since the sad day when she was borne out of it. Such as she had left it after her brief illness, it was still. When the young miller unlocked the door—he always kept the key of that room in his own care—the faint smell of lavender and dried roses which his mother had loved seemed to bring her dear presence back again before him. He closed the door softly—love and death had made the place sacred—and the dim light that stole in through the window, across which a vine had

been allowed to fling its broad green boughs, almost unpruned, gave it a solemn and religious aspect.

Maitre Salomon stepped as lightly across the floor as if he feared to waken some sleeper hidden behind the faded pink bed-curtains, all over which were portrayed the fortunes of little Cinderella. He took out his pocket-handkerchief and dusted with it the marble slab of the old chest of drawers. He raised tenderly the blue pin-cushion upon it, and in which his mother's two long silver hair-pins were still stuck, and when he put it down again, he half sighed. Grief was dead, but not that fond regret which never leaves a faithful heart.

"Maitre Salomon, I am going," screamed Catherine from the bottom of the stairs.

"Very well," he answered.

"Oh, you are up there again," she muttered, rather indignantly. This room, which she was never allowed to enter, unless in her master's presence, was a sore point with Catherine. She disapproved of it, and hinted it was no better than a calling of ghosts, to be thus keeping up an empty room. "Just ready for them. I wonder you will not go to High Mass to-day;" she persisted, from the foot of the staircase. "All Manneville will be there: Maitre Pierre Lenud and his pretty wife, Fifine, you know, and Alexis, to whom Annette left that lot of money, and Renée, the organist's wife. You do not know Renée, Maitre Salomon."

"We must not go to church to stare at our neighbours and their wives," rather austere answered the miller; but he spoke low, and more as if his dead mother could hear the words, than as if they were meant for Catherine.

"And I say it is only a calling of ghosts to keep a room empty for them," she muttered, giving up the point, and going her way.

The obstinate miller opened the window. A gentle breeze suddenly stirred the vine-leaves, and a golden sunbeam stole in through a thick cluster, making a warm light on the red tiled floor. "That vine must be pruned," thought the miller, making the little opening wider with his hand; he soon paused in sudden surprise at the unexpected picture below him. This window overlooked the narrowest part of the river. A tall beech tree that grew on one bank flung its broad hanging boughs across the stream to the other side, and wholly hid its further course and many windings. The little nook thus seemingly enclosed was wonderfully cool and green. There was a cottage close to it, but it was invisible from the window, and the only token that the spot was ever visited by any human being consisted in two white stepping-stones which had been placed at the root of the beech tree to lead from the steep bank down to the water's edge. Many a time had the miller seen little birds hopping daintily across these stones, or dragon flies darting over the water; but either Susanne, his neighbour, came to fill her pitcher

very early or very late, for never once, often though he looked out, had he seen her or any one else by the stream. And now, to his surprise, a young girl, a stranger to Manneville he was sure, stood on the lowest of the stepping-stones, with the water rippling softly over her bare feet. Her curly black hair was loose and hung around her face, which it half hid; the sleeves of her little white bodice were tucked up to her elbows, and left her arms bare, and her faded red cloth petticoat was carefully gathered above her ankles, so as not to get wet. She stood very still, looking down at herself in the water, then suddenly sitting down on the topmost stone, and bending over the river, she took up water in both her hands and began washing her face with great zeal. An obstinate black spot on her left cheek required a good deal of rubbing and several appeals to the natural mirror at her hand, before she was satisfied. Shaking back her hair, she showed the miller a pleasant round dimpled face, just then all sparkling with bright water-drops, and two laughing blue eyes, with an open childish look in them that did one good to see. He thought that, her ablutions being performed, she would go away, but she did not. She wiped her face dry with a white cloth lying on the grass, then took out a little comb from her pocket, and combed out her hair very carefully. Then she tied it back with a crimson ribbon, which she bound round her head after, in what the miller thought, a very becoming fashion; then bending over the water, she looked at herself and seemed by no means to quarrel with her own image.

"Mariette, Mariette, you will never be ready," cried a voice far away.

"I am coming, com—ing," answered the young girl, with a sort of song, and slipping her feet into a pair of wooden shoes that lay by her, she sprang away, and in a moment was hidden from the miller's view. He waited awhile to see if she would return, but she did not, so he let the vine-leaves fall back, closed the window, shut the door, and went down to the solitary kitchen. The sun was shining through the tall window on the brick floor, and the great clock was ticking behind the half-open door. The summer air was still, and as the mill was not at work, the sound of the church-bells were very clear. "Catherine is right; I ought to go to mass," thought the miller; and as it was not too late, he dressed and went at once.

High Mass was beginning as Maitre Salomon entered the church of Manneville, and went up to his bench. He had a whole one to himself, in which he always sat alone. Catherine never used it. She had sat at the lower end of the church in a dark corner, and in the draught of two doors, ever since she was fifteen, and would have been wretched to sit anywhere else. It was, therefore, with a start of surprise that the miller saw a woman kneeling in the seat where ever since his mother had died he had knelt and prayed alone; and with much trepidation

that he recognized the young girl whom he had seen from the window in his mother's room. She knelt with her face buried in her little brown hands, but he was sure of her identity, and was so disconcerted that he had barely recovered his presence of mind by the time the sermon began. His little neighbour never once turned towards him. Her eyes were fastened on the pages of her book and the miller could scarcely see her bent face. There was nothing distracting in the top of her white cap, nor even in the end of crimson ribbon which came down behind on her slender neck; her little girlish figure was so still that, if his head had not been pertinaciously turned her way, Maitre Salomon might have forgotten her presence; but he did not, and it was only by staring at the large brass eagle reading-desk in front of the altar that he succeeded in keeping his eyes off of her till mass was ended. Even then he kept staring on at the eagle, till a little low voice said in his ear, "Please let me pass." Then he gave a great start, and saw for a moment a little round face which passed by him, and, mingling with the crowd, was gone almost as soon as seen. The miller did not look for it; he was a shy man by nature and habit, and went straight home.

Maitre Salomon stood on the road in front of his house the next day, when he heard the sound of a beetle hard at work on some lipen in the vicinity of the beech tree. "Is it the little girl with the red ribbon?" thought the miller, and he went straight up to his mother's room. He opened the window very softly and peeped through the vine-leaves; he saw the little girl with the red ribbon, as he called her, washing some linen with much superfluous energy, and a prodigal use of that noisy beetle which had betrayed her presence. She knelt in the box lined with straw which French peasant-women use for that purpose, and was rinsing out a long white table-cloth, dyeing the little river with soap bubbles that floated down the stream. When this was done, she sat down on the higher one of the two stones, and began biting in a piece of brown bread with the honest appetite of fifteen.

"It is but a little thing, a young thing," thought the miller, watching her with much pleasure through the vine-leaves. "How it bites in that hard dry bread," and he looked on when the bread was eaten, and the washing resumed, and he forgot the passing of time till twelve struck and the Angelus rang. No sooner did the little girl hear the church bell than she started to her feet with a suddenness that partook of alarm, and snatching up her linen, washed and unwashed, she rushed off, leaving her box, beetle, and soap behind her. In a few minutes Susanne came and fetched them. Then all was still again, and the little river flowed on quietly once more, and a white pigeon alighted on one of the stepping-stones, and after strutting up and down across it for awhile, flew away.

"Who and what can she be?" thought the miller, as he sat eating his dinner by the table in the kitchen window. Catherine, who was

washing up plates and dishes by the fireplace, in which; though it was June, a wood fire was crackling, unexpectedly gave him the information he wanted.

"Some people are lucky," began Catherine, in a high, irritated key; "they do not go into service; they have servants of their own, who wear red ribbons in their hair—little pert, conceited things."

The miller, on hearing this, gave Catherine a look which so plainly said "What!" that she resumed in a louder tone, "I say that Susanne's new servant is a scandal! Why she sat in your bench yesterday, Maitre Salomon! She is as saucy as a sparrow. I saw her washing this morning; and how Susanne can trust her with linen—why a baby knows as much about washing as she does, with her red ribbon. A little gadder too! Why, when twelve struck, instead of seeing to her mistress's dinner, and turning her hand to anything useful, she rushed past our garden with her head bare and her arms all covered with soap-suds, and her feet almost out of her wooden shoes, and ran along like a mad thing on the road to Fontaine. Susanne must be crazy to have taken that little thing, with as much sense in her head as a linnet. And her name is Mariette, too;" she added, as if this were the culminating point in the sins of Susanne's servant.

The miller heard this, but all he thought was, "Why did she start off so as twelve struck, and what could she be racing off to Fontaine for?" and instead of smoking his after-dinner pipe by the little lake as usual, he went and walked up and down the hedge that divides his garden from the road. Presently he heard a clatter of wooden shoes, and looking over the hedge, the tall miller saw a little figure coming towards him. It was she, bare-headed, and dressed just as he had seen her washing, in a dingy old red petticoat, and with a large cotton handkerchief loosely fastened around her neck. She was much flushed, and rather out of breath, but she brought back neither bundle nor basket. The miller looked after her as she dived down the shady path that led to Susanne's cottage, and he wondered what her errand on that lonely sunburnt road had been.

Maitre Salomon had not much to do about this time, so he went up and down a good deal to his mother's room, or walked in his garden by the hedge, but he did not see Mariette. Once or twice, however, he heard her singing in a voice so sweet and clear that he thought, "Catherine was right in calling her a linnet. She is a bird, one hears but does not see her."

At length, on the Saturday morning, he saw her again from behind the vine-leaves. She had come for water to the river, and laying her pitcher slantwise in the stream, she let it fill there slowly, idly watching the water as it flowed in and out. She stood in the dry shade of the beech tree, but here and there a sunbeam stole in upon her, and one played on her head and lit up her dark hair with specks of the richest

gold. The miller—who perhaps had a painter's eye—was watching her with infinite pleasure, when the noonday Angelus rang. On hearing it, Mariette snatched up her pitcher, which was not half full, and darted away, leaving a great blank of shade on the spot where she had been.

The miller went down to the kitchen, took his hat from its peg behind the door, and without heeding Catherine's "Why, Maitre Salomon, the soup is on the table," he walked out on the road to Fontaine. To his surprise he saw Mariette climbing up a narrow path leading to a shady orchard on the left side of the road, and which belonged to no less a person than the miller himself. What could take her there? It was a wild, secluded spot, beyond which extended many a cornfield, and where the miller's cow grazed alone all the day long. "She cannot want to talk with Roquette," thought the miller, "and surely my unripe apples cannot tempt her." And he too climbed up the path, and was soon straying among the low, broad apple-trees. The spot was wild and lovely, a little nest of green lying in the hollow lap of the hill. Roquette was grazing there in solitary state, and a swarm of wild bees that had made its nest in a hollow tree, filled the place with a soft drowsy murmur, very pleasant to hear in the hot summer noon; lovely wild flowers and large white mushrooms also grew there in abundance, and lent their wild beauty to the miller's orchard; but the little brown-headed girl whom he had followed there was invisible. At length he found her out. The southern end of the orchard was enclosed by a bank of mossy rock and green earth, at the foot of which grew a lonely oak, young and strong and with sturdy boughs, that flung their shade far into the neighbouring cornfield. Now Mariette was perched bird-like on the lowest of these boughs, and whilst she clung with one arm to the trunk of the oak, she shaded her eyes with the hand that was free, looking earnestly at something far away. Suddenly she dropped down as lightly from her bough as if she had had a pair of wings to her back, and skipping among the rocks of the bank, she ran away through the orchard, and passed close to the miller, looking up at him with childish, fearless eyes, and giving him a little nod as he stepped aside to make way for her. Maitre Salomon looked after her till she had vanished, then he climbed up the bank, and without requiring the aid of the oak bough, he scanned attentively the prospect at which Mariette had been gazing. Corn, tall yellow corn, corn waving beneath the summer sun in the soft summer air, was all he saw—save far away in the glittering haze of noonday, the sails of the windmill moving lazily. Even as the miller eyed them askance their motion ceased, and all was still again in the tranquil landscape. "It never can be to look at that thing, that she came here," thought the miller, "she knows better, I am sure, little though she is."

However that might be, close observation gave the miller the certainty that every day a little before noon Mariette went up to his

orchard. Only once did he follow her and watch her from a distance, and then he saw her again perched in the tree. "I suppose it is a bird, and likes that," thought the miller, greatly puzzled.

Every village has its bad character. The bad character of Manneville just then was a young scamp called Simon Petit, who though no more than ten years old, had the credit of robbing all the farmyards and plundering all the orchards in the place. A favourite exploit of this young brigand's was also to catch, in spite of every penal injunction to the contrary, the speckled trout that played on the pretty bed of the little river.

"The young villain is at his old tricks," indignantly thought Maitre Salomon, as looking through the vine-leaves on a sunny morning, he saw, instead of Mariette, the little cunning face and serpent figure of Simon, who, armed with a long pole, was cautiously exploring the banks of the river. He stole away, and was soon hidden among the alder bushes. He had scarcely vanished, when Mariette appeared with a pitcher in her hand. She laid it down in the stream, and watched the water flowing into it, with a sad, dejected look. Twelve struck; Mariette did not stir. Something had happened assuredly, or she would never stand thus with downcast eyes and arms hanging down loosely by her sides. But suddenly she gave a start as Simon Petit, stepping out from behind the alder bushes, appeared before her with a fine trout in his hand. He, too was, taken by surprise, but looking her boldly in the face, he said with cool effrontery:—

"The trout jumped out of the river, and so I picked it up. You saw it jumping, did you not?"

"No, indeed," bluntly answered Mariette. She looked incredulous; Simon's little cunning eyes winked, but he was mute; Mariette said:

"Do something for me, and no one shall know about the trout: run up the road, go through the orchard on the left hand, climb up into the oak tree, and tell me if the sails of the windmill are quiet or turning?"

"What do you want to know that for?" asked Simon.

"Never mind."

"Then why do you not go yourself?"

"Will you go or not?" she asked, stamping her foot impatiently.

She held out no threat about the trout, yet Simon gave in at once, and promising to do her errand, he vanished. Mariette sat down on the higher of the two stepping-stones, and clasping her hands around her knees, waited patiently for his return.

Maitre Salomon, shaking his head at what he had heard and seen, went down stairs, walked out on the road, and found Simon there, peering round him before he ventured into the orchard, for he had been caught there once upon a time, and fear, like a dragon, kept watch in the path. The miller had no need to speak. The moment Simon saw

him, he caught up his trout, which he had hidden in a cool hollow of the hedge, and fled precipitately. The miller looked after him with grim satisfaction, and thought : " I suppose I must do that little thing's errand, and see about that windmill myself now."

So he went up to his orchard and ascertained that his enemy the windmill was motionless. " But what can she want to know that for ?" thought Maitre Salomon as he came down again.

" Why your soup has been cooling this half hour, Maitre Salomon," cried Catherine, standing on the threshold of the kitchen door ; but without heeding her Maitre Salomon walked round the mill, took a little path that led to the river, and found Mariette still sitting on the stepping-stone and waiting there for Simon's return. She looked round on hearing the miller's step, and gazed up at him with simple wonder on her young face. He looked down at her quietly, and entered at once on his subject. " I am the miller, and yonder is my mill, and from my window, the one with the vine-leaves up there, I heard you a while ago talking to that good-for-nothing Simon Petit. Take my advice, and have nothing to do with that fellow, who has more wickedness in his little finger than many a big man in his whole body."

" And is there a window up there behind the vine ?" was Mariette's only reply. " Well, I should never have thought so ; how can you see from behind these thick green leaves ?"

" That is neither here nor there," answered the miller, a little impatiently ; " but Simon knows better than to put a foot in my orchard since the day when I caught him stoning Roquette after filling his cap with apples ; so he ran away when he saw me. Being, as it were, the cause of your disappointment, I went in his stead, though what you can want to look at that windmill for, is more than I can imagine. Take my word for it, of all the ugly things of man's making, a windmill is the ugliest, and *that* windmill is the ugliest I ever saw. But every one to his liking ; and any time you fancy going up to the orchard, why do so, and take some of the fruit and be welcome to it, for you see the orchard is mine, and if I make you welcome, why no one has a right to gainsay it."

" Thank you," replied Mariette, who looked as if she had not minded a word he was uttering. " But please, were the sails going ?"

" Why should they be ?" asked the miller rather sharply. " I tell you that mill is a bad thing altogether, and that he who built it has rued it many and many a time."

" Well, but were the sails going ?" again asked Mariette, looking anxious.

" No !" decisively answered the miller ; " they were as still as if they were nailed."

The colour fled from Mariette's cheeks, and left them white.

" They were not going," she said faintly ; " then I am undone, un-

done!" and she looked at him so wildly, wringing her hands, that the miller thought she was surely distracted.

"Why, child," he argued, "what can that windmill be to you?"

Mariette did not answer him; but looking at him in the same wild way, she rose and left him without uttering another word. "Is the little thing crazy?" thought Maitre Salomon, going back to the mill-house a strangely puzzled man.

This was to be a day of events to every one about the mill: Catherine, much perplexed by Maitre Salomon's fancy to go out instead of eating his soup, was stealing out softly to see what he was about when she was accosted by an old beggar-woman from Fontaine, named Justine. "This is not Friday," said Catherine, sharply, "Come on Friday, and you will get something, as usual." Friday is the great begging and almsgiving day in Manneville.

"You should not let riches harden your heart, Mademoiselle Catherine," said Justine pitifully. "You should not. It is not because your cousin Mederic has left you all that money that you should ill-use the poor, Mademoiselle Catherine."

Even the deaf can hear the magic words "riches" and "money." Catherine put questions and was answered, and Catherine learned with indignation and dismay that her cousin Maitre Mederic, the childless widower, was dead and buried, and that his heirs had begun to quarrel over his inheritance, without thinking it needful to summon her to a division of the spoil. Catherine was a woman of spirit. In five minutes her resolve was taken, and when Maitre Salomon came in to his dinner, Catherine, instead of giving him a scolding, informed him, in her highest key, that she was going to Fontaine to get her rights; that she was sure the old oaken press, black and bright as ebony, would be gone if she delayed; and last of all, that her cousin Mederic was dead.

Thus it happened that Maitre Salomon, instead of being cheered by the conversation of Catherine that evening, sat alone in his kitchen, and after eating his supper of bread and cheese, and drinking his glass of cider, looked dreamily in the embers of his decaying fire of rape stalks.

The evenings are always chill in Manneville, and this was a rainy one; besides, Maitre Salomon liked company, "and fire is good company at any time, as my mother used to say," he remarked to himself. So he sat, and was looking absently at the mild red glow on his hearth, when the kitchen door behind him opened softly, and, looking sharply round, the miller saw the pale, startled face of Mariette in the opening.

"Oh, please, can I come in?" she whispered. "I shall stay only a little while; but please do let me in."

"Come in," said the miller, rising. "What is it?"

Mariette, instead of answering him, darted in, looked round her sharply, espied, spite the mild gloom in the kitchen, the door that led to the rooms on the first floor, and opening it, flew up the steps, as swift and light as a kitten. The miller was rather bewildered, but phlegmatic people rarely lose their presence of mind; so Maitre Salomon lit a candle, bolted the kitchen door, and followed his visitor, whom he found on the landing hiding behind the door of Catherine's room.

"Mariette," he said, "what has happened?"

"The tinker has come for me," she replied pityfully. "He says he is my father you know; but I know he is not, and I will never go away with him, never. He came into Susanne's, but I jumped out of the window as he entered the door, and pray do not tell him I am here, for I hate him, I do."

The light of the miller's candle fell on the pale, tearful face of the frightened girl.

"The tinker—what tinker?" he asked.

"The tinker," she said pettishly, as if the world held but one, "and I hate him, and do not tell him I am here; and pray do not give me up to him."

If she had been an outcast, steeped in shame and sin, the miller could not have resisted the appeal nor the pitiful look she raised to his.

"No one shall touch thee here," he said almost sternly. "And look," he added, drawing a key from his pocket and opening a door at the farthest end of the landing, "this is my dead mother's room. Take the light, go in, and lock the door on thyself, and let us see who will go in after thee there."

Mariette did as she was bid, and entered the room in a silent awe, wakened by the words "dead mother." The miller waited till she had locked the door on herself, then he went downstairs, lit another candle, unbolted the door, and taking out his pipe, began to smoke leisurely. He had not been engaged thus five minutes when the door opened, and Catherine, followed by the dirtiest and most ill-looking gipsy sort of tinker whom the miller had ever set his eyes on, entered the kitchen.

"Well, Maitre Salomon," she cried in breathless indignation, "I told you how it would be. The black oaken press was gone, and the warming-pan as well. That warming-pan had been a hundred years in the family, and I had a longing for it ever since I was a child. You could read seven-hundred and fifty-five upon it quite plainly, and this honest tinker whom I have just met, actually had it yesterday from my cousin Angelique herself to clean up, and he says it was as good as new and as bright as gold."

"It was a noble warming-pan," said the tinker, in a hollow voice,

whilst his dark eye stole about the room as if in search of something or some one. He had a swarthy face, harsh features, and a rusty brown beard, and the miller thought he had never seen so evil-looking a fellow ; so, being a man of few words, he asked shortly, "What is your business here?"

"I came about some saucepans," humbly answered the tinker, looking at Catherine.

"Yes, you shall have them all," she replied, guessing what was going on, "but I must know what Angelique got besides the warming-pan : I know Mederic had copper saucepans ; there was one as large as this—suppose you begin with it?"

She was going to take down a large casserole, and the tinker was stepping forward to take it from her, when the miller took out his pipe, stretched out his arm, and uttered a "Stop," so loud and imperative that even Catherine heard it.

"Not a casserole, not a warming-pan of my late mother's, shall that man touch," he said sternly. "Such as they are now, they remain."

Having uttered this sentence with due solemnity, the miller rose and walked out. Catherine was sure to understand that when the miller walked out of his own kitchen he had invariably pronounced some sentence from which there was no appeal.

Maitre Salomon went no farther than the end of his own garden. He suddenly remembered that he had left the enemy in the very heart of the citadel, and walking back to the house at once, he found the kitchen empty, whilst a streak of light coming down the staircase, and a sound of voices, guided him to the first floor. He walked up softly, and caught the tinker in the act of trying the door of his mother's room, whilst he was saying, "I dare say she is in here."

Maitre Salomon took the gipsy by the arm, swung him round, and thrusting him down stairs, exclaimed in wrath, very unusual to him, "You scoundrel, how dare you attempt to go in there? And you, Catherine, are you mad, and do you mean us to part, that you brought him up here?"

"Heaven bless you, Maitre Salomon," cried Catherine, looking frightened out of her wits, "the poor man meant no harm, and knew nothing about the room. He is only looking after his cat, Minette. It seems she escaped from him a while ago, so I daresay he thought she had crept up the vine and got in there, and I hope you have not hurt the honest man. He seems so fond of his cat ; I suppose he carries her about with him ; and how was he to know that doors are locked, and rooms kept for ghosts, poor man."

Without heeding this speech, the miller went down and ascertained that the intruder was gone ; but when Catherine, after casting this parting taunt about ghosts and the closed door, came down in her turn and looked about her, she saw, to her dismay, that her new umbrella,

which she had put in a corner on coming in, had disappeared as well as the tinker.

"The honest man took it to clean it up for you," said the miller, with grim satisfaction. "Perhaps he thought it was Minette."

"The thief! I shall catch him yet," cried Catherine. But the tinker, whether a thief or not, was not so easily caught; and when at the end of ten minutes she came back red with anger and running, she bore no umbrella in her hand. Her lamentations at this calamitous ending of her journey to Fontaine in search of an inheritance were so loud and so troublesome, that the miller said impatiently, "Go to bed, Catherine, go to bed, and let us hear no more about the umbrella or the tinker."

And as Catherine was tired, she did go to bed after a while, not without grumbling at the hard-heartedness of men, for whom one might slave and slave, and be treated like a dog in the end.

Maitre Salomon bore all this philosophically; and when the house was quiet once more, he went to the dresser, took down a plate, put bread and cheese on the table, and filled a jug with cider. Then he softly stole upstairs, and tapped at the door of his mother's room. It opened cautiously, and Mariette's little round face and startled eyes peeped out at last.

"You may come down," said the miller; "he is gone. Catherine is in bed, and she is deaf as a post."

Mariette obeyed, not without casting many startled looks around her.

"I tell you not to be afraid," said the miller, when they stood in the kitchen. "He is gone, and here are bread and cheese and cider for you. Eat and drink; you are as pale as a ghost."

At first Mariette would not hear of eating or drinking, and kept looking behind her back; but when the miller bolted the door, she uttered a sigh of relief, sat down, and after a little coaxing, took a sip of the cider; then, after a little more persuasion, she began to bite in the bread and cheese, remarking, apologetically,

"I was just sitting down to supper when he came in at the door, and I had to jump out of the window."

The miller looked at her fresh young face, and remembering the sallow, ill-looking tinker, he could not help saying: "Surely that fellow is no father of yours?"

But Mariette raised her eyebrows, pursed up her lips, and shaking her head wisely, said, "She did not know—she could not tell. He might not be her father; but then she remembered no other. He used to beat her, to be sure; but some fathers beat their daughters. All she remembered of herself was trotting by his side when he went about tinkering, and being sometimes carried on his back; of course he made her beg, but she did not get much; may be that was why he beat her. Perhaps he had stolen her, and that she was some grand lady's offspring. Only how could she tell?" It is so hard to know whose child one is," argued

Mariette, gravely. "It was because he beat her so one evening that Père Joseph, who built the windmill, you know, that handsome windmill"—Maitre Salomon winced—"bought her from the tinker through sheer pity, and that was how she had been living with Jacques in the windmill ever since dear Père Joseph died." As she came to this part of her story Mariette's eyes grew dim, and her voice faltered. The miller looked hard at her, and was silent awhile.

"I suppose you are to marry Jacques, and live in that handsome windmill," he remarked, rather shortly.

"Marry Jacques! Why Jacques was married," pettishly exclaimed Mariette. "As to living in the windmill, how could she, when she was pursued by that horrid tinker? Had she not been obliged to come and hide from him at Susanne's? And had it not been agreed between her and Jacques that he would use the sails of his windmill as a signal to let her know when the tinker was coming? And had not Jacques sent her word that very morning not to stir out of doors? And was she not ready to expire with sheer fright when Maitre Salomon told her that the sails of the windmill were motionless, and she thereby knew that the dreadful tinker was on her track? But she would die first, she would, before she went again with him tramping about the country, mending old saucepans. Yes, she would die first; but what a pretty room that was upstairs, only how terrified she was in it; but then the story of Cinderella on the curtains, was so pretty that she could not help looking at it, and reading the legends under every picture: she had never seen such a pretty room." And so she prattled on, eating and drinking all the time, and seeming to have put by every fear and every care.

Many a time had the miller shaken his head as he listened to her story. It was such a pitiful one. He saw her a little child, wandering about with that savage tinker, beaten, ill-used, made to beg, and only saved from his clutches by becoming a dependent in a stranger's house. They had been kind to her, it seemed, at the windmill, but this Jacques had not married her, of course not, and what was to become of her now, poor little thoughtless thing?

"Mariette," he said, at length, "hast thou got a sweetheart?"

"No," replied Mariette, shortly.

"No lad, no young man of Fontaine, whom thou wouldst care for and like to marry?"

"Where is the use, when no one would have me?" she said, impatiently.

"Then she did care for some one," thought the miller, a little downcast; but no, a few more questions convinced him that Mariette was fancy free, only she knew very well that because of her doubtful birth and poverty no one would care to have her, and it did not please her to be reminded of the fact.

"Well, well, there is time enough for thee to enter on the cares of marriage," said the miller; "yet it would save thee from the tinker. Only just promise me this—do not marry without letting me know about it first?"

"Why so?" asked Mariette, opening her blue eyes.

"I may want to make thee a present," replied the miller, after a long pause.

Mariette looked grateful and beaming; but all of a sudden the look of fear came back to her face. She had heard a noise outside; she was sure the tinker was coming. In vain the miller reminded her that the tinker, having taken Catherine's umbrella, would not come back. Mariette assured him that to steal and return to the very house whence he had stolen was the tinker's way. In short, she was so frightened and so restless that Maitre Salomon, struck with a bright idea, or what he thought such, said:—

"Do not leave the house for fear thou shouldst meet the tinker, child. Go back to the room upstairs, and sleep there for to-night. It is my mother's room, and no one has slept in it since she died. I will walk round to Susanne, and tell her that thou art safe here."

Mariette looked charmed, then frightened. Security is delightful; but ghosts are dreadful company, and Catherine's words about that room had not fallen on heedless ears; but ghosts, after all, are not so terrible as the living, so she accepted the miller's hospitable proposal, and whilst he went round to tell Susanne of her whereabouts, Mariette stole back to her refuge upstairs.

She was not very timorous, after all; and, although she entered that room with a sort of awe, it soon gave place to other feelings. She liked the scent of the lavender and dried roses; she liked those pink bed-curtains, and the story of little Cindrella upon them; so noble a chest of drawers as this she had never seen; and the faded blue pin-cushion, with the long silver pins in it, was a marvel in her eyes. Not in all the windmill was there a room like this! Surely the late owner of that room had been a happy woman? Was she like her son, wondered Mariette, tall and fair, and had she blue eyes and a serious smile? As she stood on the middle of the floor, looking round her, with a light in her hand, and thus speculating, she suddenly thought of something else, put down the light, went to the window, and, opening it softly, and parting the vine-leaves, looked out on the dark night.

It was not all dark, for the moon was out, riding in the sky with strange haste, thought Mariette. Her light fell in streaks on the little gurgling river below, making patches of silver here and there. Everything was very still: then, all of a sudden, Mariette heard voices talking low in that stillness. One was Susanne's, and the other—yes, she was sure the other voice was the tinker's. What was he saying? She could not tell, for terror almost paralysed her, but she could guess, for she

heard the words "room" and "vine-leaves" very plainly. Had the light betrayed her? Mariette ran and blew it out at once, then came back to the window, and, not daring to put her head out through the vine-leaves, keeping in her breath, so great were her terror and her wish to hear more, she listened intently, whilst the careless moon still rode in the sky, throwing her quivering light on the little river gliding softly on its way to the sea.

Susanne was not in her cottage when Maitre Salomon went to tell her that Mariette was at the mill-house. He went again in an hour's time, but Susanne had not returned; he shook her door and knocked at it in vain. "Well, the child is safe, at least," thought the miller, and he went back to his own home, and, after sitting up till midnight—a very rare occurrence with him—he softly went upstairs to bed. He paused as he passed by the door of his mother's room. It was very still. "The little bird is fast asleep," he thought kindly. "It has put its head under its wing after all its troubles, and it is fast asleep." And he felt hospitably glad to have given this poor hunted bird so safe a nest.

Catherine, whose slumbers had been much disturbed by dreams of the black oaken press, the warming-pan, and her stolen umbrella, rose with dawn, and was rather surprised to find her master below with a loaf and a plateful of freshly gathered cherries on the table before him. "Are you hungry, Maitre Salomon," she exclaimed. "Why you never eat at this hour!"

"I suppose I can eat my own cherries when I like," he answered shortly; and to put an end to her questions he walked out into the garden. He felt annoyed not to have been beforehand with Catherine; he was sure Mariette was awake and hungry, and he wished her to eat some of his cherries, the best in Manneville; also he had been thinking all night over something which he wished to say to her this morning. For one so calm, not to say phlegmatic, Maitre Salomon felt in a rare fever, and there was a great throb of mingled uneasiness and joy at his heart, when he saw Catherine leave the house, and heard her scream to him from the garden gate that she was going to look for her umbrella, and would not be long away.

"She is always long, God bless her poor soul," thought Maitre Salomon, going back to the house. His first act was to bolt the kitchen door, so as not to be surprised, then he stole upstairs, and knocking softly at the door of his mother's room, he said aloud: "Mariette, Catherine is gone, and thou must have something to eat. Shall I bring thee the bread and cherries, and leave them at the door, or wilt thou come down to the kitchen. It is nice and cool, and the door is bolted." Mariette returned no answer.

Was she still asleep? These young things sleep both sound and late. The miller raised his voice and spoke again—in vain. With a vague

suspicion of the truth, he tried the door, it yielded to his hand. He looked in from the threshold ; Mariette was not there. The bed had not been slept in, the window was open, the cage was empty, and the bird was flown. She had fled in the night through the door or down the window, by the help of the old vine ; no matter when or how, one thing was certain, she was gone—gone without so much as bidding him good-bye, or saying "I thank you."

She was an ungrateful child, and the miller felt he ought not to have given her another thought ; but he could not help himself, and even though he felt sure he should not find her at Susanne's, he yet went round at once to his neighbour's cottage. Susanne's amazement at his questions was too genuine to be feigned. She had seen nothing of the girl since she had left her cottage the evening before.

"I dare say the tinker has got her, after all," said Susanne, shaking her head ; "I always said he would. He is her father, you know."

How calmly she spoke of it. Maitre Salomon felt too angry to do more than turn his back upon her and walk away. He did not go back to his own house. He felt sadly sure that he should be as unsuccessful in Fontaine as he had been with Susanne ; yet a tormenting power which he could not resist actually made him walk off at once to that object of his aversion the windmill, and seek the fugitive there. "I only want to know that she is safe, that is all," he said to himself, as if he needed that justification of his egregious piece of folly. "She is a child, and she slept, or was to sleep, in my mother's room, and so I ought to know what has become of her."

Maitre Salomon found the miller, a sturdy young man white with flour, standing at his own door with a fat baby in his arms. "I come to see about Mariette," said Maitre Salomon abruptly ; for the right of the windmill and of his rival had roused his old animosity to all its early vigour. "I think she ought not to have gone away without bidding me good-bye ; but that is neither here nor there ; provided she is safe, I am content ; let her be civil or not."

"Marie," called the miller, "come out. Here is the miller from Manneville, who has something to say about Mariette." A fresh young woman came out on this summons, and Maitre Salomon telling them both briefly all he knew, again asked about Mariette.

"Then the tinker has got her, after all," said the young miller coolly. "Marie, take the baby, it is getting sleepy." Then turning to Maitre Salomon : "You know nothing more about her, I suppose ?"

"Did I not come to ask about her ?" said the miller, curtly.

"Ah ! to be sure." And, having handed the baby to his wife, the owner of the windmill looked hard at the owner of the watermill. Maitre Salomon felt exasperated.

"Will you do nothing ? Will you not interfere ?" he asked, glaring at his enemy.

"I am that baby's father, and the tinker is Mariette's father," stolidly answered Jacques.

"I do not believe it. I will never believe the wretch is that poor innocent child's father!" indignantly retorted Maitre Salomon.

"Perhaps he is not," quietly said Jacques, and he looked at his rival as much as to say, "If you please, that matter is settled."

Maitre Salomon scorned to waste any more words on this unfeeling animal. With a sad and heavy heart he went home, thinking all the way: "Oh, Mariette; if I had had the care of you all these years, I would not let you go so coolly from me; and no tinker, no, not were he ten times your father, should have taken you."

Maitre Salomon found Catherine at home, and in great glee. "I have found my umbrella," she cried. "The villain had sold it to Vic-toire, but I made her give it back; and he is in prison at Fontaine, the good-for-nothing scapegrace, for having stolen Desiré's new chaldron, which he bought last Michaelmas, you know."

"In prison at Fontaine," cried the miller, with sudden hope, "and—and was any one found with him?"

Joy seemed to have opened Catherine's ears, for she heard and answered the question. "Some one with him? No, indeed; there is a band of them, no doubt; but he was caught alone."

The miller was glad to think the child was safe; but it stung him to learn that she had not been forcibly taken away. "It was of her own free will that she left me so ungratefully in the night," he thought, sitting down with a downcast look. "She wanted me no more, and so she stole away without so much as 'good-bye' or 'thank you,' little uncivil thing. I will think no more about her."

"Why, Maitre Salomon, you have not eaten your cherries, after all," said Catherine.

"Eat them, Catherine, or give them away," he replied, with a sorrowful shake of his head; "I want no cherries."

He rose and went upstairs as he said it. Catherine ate half the cherries and gave the rest to a neighbour's child, whilst Maitre Salomon locked the door of his mother's room and said to himself, as he put the key in his pocket, "That is the end of my fancy! yes, that is the end."

There was an epidemic in Manneville about this time, and Maitre Salomon proved one of its first victims. He did not die, indeed, as his neighbour Susanne did, but he lay ill for many weeks, and when he recovered Catherine took the disease, and lay in her grave before ten days were over. She had been years with her young cousin and master, and though she was deaf and wilful, not to say tiresome, he missed her much, and grieved for her sincerely.

"You must take some one else, Maitre Salomon," said his female neighbours. "Take little Catherine: her having the name you are so used to, will make it convenient."



A. C. H. LUXMOORE.

EDMUND EVANS.

Her curly black hair was loose and hung around her face; the sleeves of her little white bodice were tucked up and left her arms bare, and her faded red-cloth petticoat was carefully gathered above her ankles, so as not to get wet, "Mariette, Mariette, you will never be ready," cried a voice far away.

"Take Lunie," said another, "she is as good a worker as you can get."

"Time enough for it all," gloomily replied the miller, evidently wishing to be left to his own ways. These were dull and sad enough. It might be his recent illness : it might be the death of Catherine ; it might be anything else, but life certainly was very joyless to Maitre Salomon just then. Even his mill had ceased to please him ; even his mother's room he rarely entered now ; and he must have been a very touchy man, for he was always brooding over Mariette's want of civility. "I had not deserved it from her," he said to himself, as he sat alone one evening indulging in retrospective discontent, "and I am sure she was hiding in the windmill all the time I was talking to that Jacques of hers. Of course she was laughing at me to be running after her like a fool. And I had been kind to her, and if my mother had taken her, I am sure she would, poor, dear soul, if she had had the opportunity. Mariette would have found a difference between the watermill of Manneville and the windmill of Fontaine."

A great difference the young miller's fancy certainly made in Mariette's imaginary destiny at the watermill. He played with her as a child in the garden, and on the banks of the little lake ; he took her up to his mother's room and made her look out on the river from behind the old vine ; he brought her home some of the smartest of red ribbons for her dark hair as she grew up, and enjoyed her bright eyes and merry laugh, when he took these ribbons out of his pocket and held them up to her admiration ; and above all he allowed no Marie and no fat baby to come between him and his little friend. As for the tinker, he disposed of him by making him confess, through the might of some irresistible argument, that Mariette was no child of his, but an orphan whom he had stolen, and all whose relations were dead. Thus far had the miller's reverie proceeded, when a tap at his kitchen door roused him. "Here they are, coming again to worry me about little Catherine and Lunie," he thought, annoyed at being disturbed at that particular part of his dream : and though he said "Come in," he did not look round.

The door opened gently, a light step crossed the kitchen floor, and drew near him. Then the miller looked up, and in the dim twilight he saw Mariette herself standing before him with only the kitchen table by which he sat between them. He was so amazed at this unexpected apparition, that he could not speak.

"I am afraid you are angry with me," timidly said Mariette, "but I could not help running away that night. I heard the tinker talking to Susanne, and when he came round to the mill-house door I was so frightened that I jumped out of the window and nearly got drowned. I ran away to the windmill, and have been hiding ever since : but I am safe now, for he is in prison for three years, and I am so glad ; and I hope you are not angry with me."

"I am not," replied the miller, slowly; "but it was not civil to run away, Mademoiselle Mariette."

Mariette hung her head abashed, and was mute; then, suddenly looking up and speaking in a rapid, childish way, "I do not come for the present, Maitre Salomon; I do not want it; but I had promised to tell you, and I am going to get married. Jacques and Marie have found me a husband—Marie's cousin. They did not want me to tell you, but I said I had promised: and I am to be married next week."

"Married?" repeated the miller, staring at her, "married, and you come and tell me."

"Yes, I had promised, Maitre Salomon. Have you forgotten?"

He could not answer. He still stared at her as she stood there before him, neat, demure, and pretty, a little bird-like creature, and he asked himself, with a sharp pang, why he could not have had her as well as another man.

"Married!" he said again, setting his teeth as he spoke, "why, what makes you marry?"

Mariette stared in her turn. Had he forgotten the advice he had given her to marry, in order to be safe from the tinker? Why, she had repeated this advice to Jacques, and he had thought so well of it, that he and Marie had found her a husband."

"Do not tell me that again," interrupted the miller, exasperated. "Of course you like him!"

"Not much," replied Mariette, confidentially; "he is old; fifty, at least,"

"Fifty! Why, he could be your grandfather," exclaimed Maitre Salomon.

"He is very grey as well," resumed Mariette, looking depressed; "and he is deaf of one ear, but he hears very well with the other, and I like his eldest daughter, Louise, so much."

So this man was not merely old, deaf, and grey, but he was also a widower. Was he rich, at least, to make up for so many drawbacks! asked the miller, indignantly.

"Rich!" echoed Mariette, with a gay laugh, "if he were rich he would not have me. But Louise is going to get married, and he wants some one to take care of him, and Jacques wants me to be safe from the tinker, so he and Marie found him out. He was not willing at first, but he made up his mind and came and said so this morning, and we are to be married next week."

Maitre Salomon could not believe his ears. Was she, this pretty, innocent, thoughtless child, to be sacrificed so? Was she to become an old man's nurse in order to be saved from a tinker who was not her father, Maitre Salomon was sure. He rose, he walked about his kitchen in great agitation; he came back at last to Mariette, and with a great tightening at his throat, said "Mariette, they all tell me to take some

one instead of Catherine, but the fact is I feel I want a wife. Do you know of one that would suit me?"

"Oh, so well," cried Mariette, brightening; "there is Jacques' sister Delphine; she is pretty, and has plenty of money, and——"

"That was not what I meant to say," interrupted Maitre Salomon, reddening; "the fact is I cannot bear to see you marry that deaf old widower, who could not make up his mind—no, that is not it either; the truth is, Mariette," exclaimed the miller, desperately, "that I took a fancy to you when I saw you from behind the vine-leaves in my mother's room, washing your face and combing your hair, and if you will just throw the old fellow over and have me, why we can get married, and you can come here at once, because you see," added Maitre Salomon, who could not help being a matter-of-fact Norman, "everything is going wrong since Catherine died, and the neighbours worry my life out about Lunie and little Catherine, they do."

Mariette heard him, but thought she was dreaming. Could the miller, the handsome, rich, young miller of Manneville be in earnest or was *he* dreaming, that he talked so. "Well!" said Maitre Salomon, who stood before her looking down in her face.

"You cannot mean it," she replied, looking up at him with evident doubt in her blue eyes? "It is too good to be true."

But it was not too good to be true, after all, and Mariette, half laughing, half crying for joy, could not help saying, "Oh, I am so glad—so glad! for I could not bear him, only I was so frightened of the tinker. And he squints, you know," she added, confidentially; "but I did not like to say so."

The miller was a man of few words, and his courting, for many reasons, was a brief one. Marie was very much affronted that her cousin should be so cavalierly jilted; but Jacques, who had never liked the match, chuckled at its being broken off with such evident enjoyment that he won the heart of Maitre Salomon, who actually ceased to think the windmill the ugliest he had ever seen.

Mariette made the best of miller's wives. She sang like a lark, was as busy as a bee, and thought nothing and no one could compare with the mill and the Miller of Manneville. Every one liked her, even the neighbours, who had recommended Lunie and little Catherine, said she was not amiss. She had but one fault; she was too fond of looking out of that window with the vine-leaves growing so thick and green around it, and whence you can see the stepping-stones and the tall beech tree, and the little shining river flowing on in golden sunlight or green shade.

The tinker died suddenly in prison, and had no time to say anything about Mariette's relations. "Never mind," says Maitre Salomon, "I am sure they are all dead."

QUITE BY ACCIDENT.

“WE used to have lots o’ gen’lemen down here in the shootin’ season, sir,” said the old farmer; “for there *was* good shootin’ ’bout here then, afore them botherin’ railways come and spiled everythin’. Many’s the time I’ve had as many as six or seven on ’em in this here leetle place all to once—mostly gen’lemen from Hoxfut or Cambridge: and a jolly set they was as ever I see, only now and then they *did* get a leetle rampageous, when they’d had their wine a’ter dinner. But then, bless you, young men will be young men; and they paid for all they broke like ra’al gen’lemen. The funniest on ’em all was a Muster Heathcote, a Hoxfut gen’leman—a ’mazin’ fine feller, wi’ sitch spirits as I never see; and he’d sing songs, and he’d tell stories as ’ud make me and my missis fair die o’ larfin’; and ’stead o’ gruntin’ and swearin’ when anything went wrong, like some I’ve known, he al’ays had a pleasant look and a kind word for one. I tell you, sir, I’d ha’ kep’ him a month for nowt, so I would—he was sitch a jolly ’un.

“But he was a terrible ’un to play tricks, for all that; and you never could tell what he’d be up to. I recklect one evening he come to me wi’ a shillin’ in a glass o’ water, and says he, ‘Farmer Pritchard,’ he says, ‘I’ll bet you a sov. I take this here shillin’ out o’ that there glass o’ water without your seein’ it, me standin’ on this spot all the time.’ Well, I says, Done, thinking there warn’t no mortal way o’ doin’ it without my seein’; but lawk! the word warn’t out o’ my mouth when he ups wi’ the glass, and chucks all the water slap in my eyes, so as I could’nt see a thing—and out with the shillin’ afore I knowed wheer I was. He let me off payin’ the suv’rin’ though; but, bother take him, he went and told all the neighbours, and they’ve never let me hear the end on’t since.

“Now, he was a right good customer to us, this Muster Heathcote, bein’ as how he used to tell all his friends that we’d made him nice and comfortable, and how they might al’ays find good quarters here; so that mayhap three or four on ’em ’ud come down every year, all along o’ hearing him talk. So, o’ course, we wern’t surprised when he pops in on us one fine evening, and claps me ’on the shoulder, and says to my missis, ‘Mrs. Pritchard, there are two friends of mine coming to pay you a visit, and you must make them as comfortable as you did me last year.’

“‘Thank’ee kindly,’ says my missis; ‘I’m sure we’ll do our best for any friend o’ yourn, and nobody can’t do more than their best, ye know. They’re a-comin’ for the shootin’, I s’pose?’

“‘No,’ says he, with a queer kind of laugh, ‘they’re no great hands at sportin’: in fact, I don’t think either of them ever fired a gun in their lives.’

“‘Why, bless us!’ says I, ‘what sort of folk can they be?’ for you see Mr. Heathcote hisself was an out-and-outer at shootin’, and I’d got to think as how all his friends must be the same.

“‘Well,’ says he, ‘you’ll soon know what they’re like, for they’ll be here to-morrow evening; and I’m going to get up wonderfully early in the morning, and help you to get everything ready for them.’

“Well, sir, by next afternoon everything was in trim, and my missis went in to get something nice ready for tea, while I sat down here in the porch, to smoke a quiet pipe and look out for our new customers. And, sure enough ’bout five in the evening, the old station fly cum lumbering up to the door (in them days the railway was a goodish bit farther off nor what it is now), and out pops a little, pale-faced, quiet-looking man in black (wi’ a white tie on like a parson) and helps out a young lady wrapped up in a big shawl; and then says to me, as civil as if I had been his father, ‘I hope we have not inconvenienced you, Mr. Pritchard.’ Are our rooms ready?’

“Well, then I began to see what Muster Heathcote meant by his chaff about their not being much o’ sportin’ characters; and a fine laugh we had over it, my missis and me, a’ter the gentlefolks had gone up stairs. We didn’t see much on ’em that evening, cos’ they were tired wi’ the journey, like; but next day, me and the little gen’leman in black had a long talk, and he told me as how his name was Bright—the Rev. Arthur Bright—and he was curate of some place in Lunnon—and he’d took a holiday to give his wife a mouthful o’ country air, bein’ as how she’d been ailin’ a bit. And, to my thinkin’ he was quite right there; for how the dickins folks can expect to be well in them nasty big towns, wheer the air’s jam full of dust, and smut, and sitch-like, I’m blessed if I know. Howsomdever, afore she’d bin with us a fortnight, the way she picked up was quite ’mazin’ to see. Sitch a colour! Sitch a sparkle in her eye! and as for walkin’—bless ye, she’d make no more of that there three miles ’twixt here and Royston, nor if it was jist ’across the road. A dear little thing she was, too, soft and gentle as a child, and wi’ a winnin’ way o’ her own, as ’ud a tamed a roaring lion, blest if it wouldn’t. Me and my missis was as fond of her as if she’d been a chick of our own; and her husband, bless yer! he was quite wrapt up in her—followed a’ter her everywheer, like a hen wi’ one chick. As for him (Muster Bright, I mean) he was capital company too, in his way. He warn’t not to say as brisk and as frolicsome as Muster Heathcote, but he had plenty of fun in him, too, when you cum to know him a bit. A’ter tea, when we was all sittin’ here in the porch, him and Muster Heathcote used to spin yarns o’ what they’d seen in furrin parts, when they went a-tourin’ together; all about France and Jarmany, and another country as I’ve forgot the name on, wheer there’s nowt but big mountains, wi’ snow lyin’ on em’ all the year round. But the story I liked best of all was one as Muster Bright used to tell, o’ some place

a long way off (somewher in Jarmany, if I reck'lect right) wheer a river comes clean through the very inside of a mountain, making a big tunnel, like, all the way along ; and that there tunnel's all covered from top to bottom wi' great long shinin' things, like them swingin' bits o' glass on the what d'ye call it in our parson's drawin' room ; and them things make it glitter all over, walls and roof, jist like one of them pallises in the fairy tale books*. There's wonderful things in them furrin parts, for sure ; but I likes Old England best for all that.

"Well, sir, one evening we was all sittin' in the porch as usual, when who should come by but old Martha Field—her as they used to call the White Witch o' Royston. A tall, thin woman she was, mostly wrapped in a big grey cloak, wi' a white carved-like kind o' face, and great deep eyes as looked like they was seein' [what others couldn't see. (Folk said as how she was one of them second-sighted 'uns, and could tell what was a-goin' to happen, just as the weather-glass tells when it's a-goin' to rain ; but I can't say whether that's true or not.) Anyhow, up she cum ; and I, seein' as she was tired and hot like, says to her, 'Good day t'ye, Mother Field,' says I ; 'won't ye step in and have a sup o' milk and a bit o' bread? ye look done up like.' Well, she sits down in the porch, and my missis brings her some bread and a cup o' milk, and she falls to ; but 'stead o' talkin' to us as she gin'rally did, she was mum as a mouse ; and all the while she never took her eyes off Madam Bright, but kep' lookin' at her so sadly and strangely that at last I couldn't help noticin' it.

"'Why, granny,' says I, 'whatever sets ye to look at Madam thatten ways? one 'ud think she'd done you a mischief!'

"The old 'ooman only shook her head, and said newer a word ; and what wi' her doleful looks, and her queer way o' goin' on, we all begun for to feel quite uncanny like. But Muster Heathcote, who couldn't never a-bear to see anybody a-lookin' dumpish, breaks out wi' a great laugh, and says, in his jolly way, 'Come, Granny, I'll give you a job ; suppose you tell me my fortune, for old acquaintance sake!'

"He hadn't more'n got them words out o' his mouth, when up jumps Muster Bright, lookin' angrier nor what I'd ever seed him look yet, and says, 'James,' says he, 'I'm quite surprised that you should encourage such wicked folly ; as if this poor ignorant creature could know what Providence has seen fit to conceal ! For shame !'

"Muster Heathcote, who war'n't used to be took up so sharp, begun for to look rather black ; when Madam Bright, seein' as how there was a storm a-brewin', broke in, a-tryin' to turn it off like ; 'Well,' she says, 'suppose I try to puzzle the oracle. My good woman, can you tell me where I shall be this time next year?'

"Granny Field giv' her a look I never seed the likes on (I could

* Mr. Pritchard probably refers to the Grotto of Adelsberg, between Laibach and Trieste.

reg'lar see the tears a-shinin' in them great deep eyes o' her'n), and giv' a kind o' gasp, as if she was a-tryin' to choke down summut as *would* come out; and then she says to her, in a kind o' holler whisper, 'This time next year you'll be lyin' under the green turf; and the hand that sends you there will be it as is round you now!'

"You should ha' seen Muster Bright's face, sir, when he heard them words! It went all afire in one minute, like hot iron; and he ups on his feet as if summut had stung him, and hollered out, 'You wicked woman! do you dare to say that I'm going to kill my wife?' We was all rather scared at his bustin' out thattenways, and him such a quiet little chap gin'rally. But old Martha only looks him straight in the face, and says to him, quite quietly, 'I have said the truth; and may God forgive you for forcing me to tell it!' And with that, away she flits like a shadder, and left us all a-starin' at each other like so many statteys.

"You'd only laugh at me, sir, if I was to tell you how that 'ere job stuck in my head for a day or two a'ter. And it war'nt only in *my* head as it stuck, for that matter; for all the rest on 'em was as glum and grave as could be, that day, and the next and the next. But by little and little, as the first plump o' the thing wore off, and we seed nothin' more o' Granny Field, we got to think less about it; till at last, a'ter a bit, we made fun o' the whole consarn. Every evenin', when we comed out into the porch, Muster Heathcote used to begin a-chaffin, and sayin, 'Well, Mrs. Bright, you're still within reach of this terrible assassin! I hope he'll be good enough to spare you a little longer?' Howsomdever, I notices as Madam didn't seem to like it; and all Muster Heathcote's fun couldn't make her laugh, nohow."

At this point the old man made a sudden halt, and puffed furiously at his pipe for some moments, as if unable to make up his mind to go on. I looked at him inquiringly.

"Well, you see, sir," said he, apologetically, "there's some things as ain't easy for any man to talk about; and I never can think o' that business without feeling rather queer. Howsomdever, I'll finish the yarn, as you seems to like it; but you must excuse my making short on it, for I can't a-bear to think on't.

"All this time, Muster Heathcote didn't let his shootin' get rusty. A'most everyday he was out till close upon tea-time, and he seldom cum back empty-handed; for he was a 'mazin' good shot, he was. He'd a couple o' guns wi' him, and he took 'em turn about; and the one as wasn't wanted hung above the chimney-piece in our leetle parlour, where Muster Bright and Madam was used for to sit. Now, one a'ternoon, 'bout a fortnight from the time as Granny Field cum to see us, they was a' sittin' in the parlour, and I along with them. Madam Bright had been dull and mopish-like all day, jist as if she was afeard o' somethin' go'n' to happen; and, do what we would, we couldn't brisk her up nohow. At last Muster Bright says, jokin' like, 'Depend

upon it, she's afraid of my killing her, 'as that old woman prophesied. Suppose I were to take it into my head to do it?' And wi' that he ketches hold o' Muster Heathcote's gun, as was a hangin' above the chimney-piece, and sings out, 'Look out, Mary; I'm going to shoot you. Make ready; present; fire!'

"And in that (lack-a-me!) there cum a flash and a crack, and a heavy fall—and we seed poor Madam Bright a-lyin' on the floor, and her husband a standin' over her wi' his face white as ashes, and eyes starin' like one that's been jist struck blind. I was so put about, I couldn't think to do noth'n'; but my missis runs out into the yard, and ketches hold of our man Tom, and says to him, 'Up on an 'oss and fetch Dr. Carter, for your life!' and off he went. Then she comes in ag'in, and we la'd the poor lady on the sofa, in her pretty white dress; when all at once we heard Muster Heathcote come whistlin' along past the window, jist as he al'ays did; and ra'al horrid it was to hear him so merry, knowin' noth'n' o' what had 'appen'd. But when he cum in and seed it all, he stood like a stock, and then poor Muster Bright goes up to him, and says in a kind o' laugh as made my flesh creep, 'Have you killed anything? *I have.*' Ugh! I can't a-bear to think on't even now.

"Well, the doctor cum at last, and he done all he could; but 'twarn't not a bit o' use. She jist lay quite still, poor dear, for an hour or two, and then went off like a lamb; and we buried her in the corner o' the churchyard; and I'll show you her grave to-morrow.

"You'd think, o' course, as poor Muster Bright 'ud ha' gone away as soon as all was over, and never set eyes upon the place again; but it was jist the other way about. It seemed like as he couldn't a-bear to lose sight o' the spot where he'd seen the last o' her; and every day he used to go and look at the grave, and he gave a power o' money to old Grimes, the Sexton, to keep it neat and pretty—'For,' says he, 'you'll have to lay another one there soon.'

"Them was the words as he spoke, poor young gen'leman! and true enough they were, for afore six months was over, we laid him beside her; and our parson he put on their grave a verse out o' the Bible:

"'They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.'"



CYRILLA MAUDE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

Part the First.

TRYING FOR THE MINOR CANONRY.

THE clergy were in the large room, called the Chapter-House : making ready to file out on their way to attend afternoon service at the cathedral. Standing in the cloisters, on either side the great doors of the chapter-house, two bedesmen kept guard ; looking in their black gowns not unlike two mutes, as still and as solemn. As the cathedral clock told the first stroke of the hour, three, and the organ sounded, they pushed open the doors, and, bending low their bodies in obeisance to the clergy, turned sharply round, and preceded them along the cloisters into the cathedral. The Dean was first ; only two prebendaries followed him, Dr. Maude and Mr. Lane : not a great show of the higher dignitaries would the cathedral present that afternoon : they were in their white robes and carried their trenchers. Crossing the cathedral from the opposite door, which was the grand northern entrance, so as to meet them in the nave, came the Bishop, marshalled by a vergier, bearing aloft his silver mace. The Bishop fell into his place before the Dean. The procession was next augmented by the minor canons and choristers, and finally passed on to the choir.

Ideas have changed of late years, but in the days of which this short story treats, the inner life of a cathedral might be said to comprise a daily history. The pomp would alone have constituted it. The appellation generally applied to it supper clergy, that of High Dignitary, was indeed borne out by most of them in manner. Some few were simple-hearted and Christian-minded as are any of the good men of these later times : but for the most part pomp and pride reigned—the besetting sins. Entrenched within their high clerical position, endorsing it with the undue and exalted view accorded to it by the public, some of those reserved and haughty prebendaries would scarcely deign to acknowledge the respectful salutation of a minor canon, as they passed each other in the street, and held it to be quite a condescension to do so. You may be slow to believe it now, but I am telling you truth : and many a living clergyman, attached to a cathedral as minor canon in his younger days, could bear ample testimony to it. As a rule, the prebendaries looked down on the minor canons as though they were of a totally inferior race of beings to themselves, and did not associate with them in private life. Minor canons took it all as a matter of

course: it was a state of society they had been reared to respect, and they never thought of rebelling against it. At that time the prebendaries (or canons) attached to this cathedral, Oldchurch, numbered ten; the minor canons eight. "Honorary canons"—a kind of distinction sprung up in more recent years—were then unknown.

Proudest amid the proud Chapter of Oldchurch was the Reverend Richard Maude, Doctor of Divinity, canon and sub-dean of the cathedral. A dark, stern, ugly man, who walked with his head thrown back and carried his ambition in every line of his haughty face. As he stepped into his stall, the first on the left-hand in entering the choir—the one pertaining to the sub-dean—he held his trencher for an instant before his face, and then threw his glances around to see who might be present that Sunday afternoon. It was a dark day in early November. Quite a cloud of dimness seemed to overhang the choir: but the prebendary's eyes were keen.

They rested on a row of clergymen who were sitting in a line with the officiating minor canon. Five of them. That they did not belong to the cathedral was evident, by their not wearing surplices. They were all young men, the eldest of them not exceeding thirty. The one who sat next the chanter had a pale, serious face; its expression good, and its smile one of remarkable sweetness and beauty. A large open brow was his, proclaiming its own powerful intellect: his hair and his pleasant eyes were of the same shade—brown. He was the Rev. John Hartley. Dr. Maude and other habitués of the college knew these young clergymen to be candidates for the vacant minor-canonry. Three of them were curates; the other two held livings in the town. There was no obligation whatever for them, as candidates, to attend the cathedral service, but it happened that they had all accidentally done so that Sunday afternoon.

Underneath the sub-dean, in the pew appropriated to the ladies of his family, sat his daughter, Cyrilla; a fair, attractive girl, with blue eyes, strangely sweet and thoughtful in their earnestness. She had come in just before the cathedral clergy, and, as she rose from her knees, her eyes encountered those of the Rev. Mr. Hartley. No salute might pass: it was neither the time nor place for it: but a half smile illumined his countenance, and she blushed vividly. Had any of the gossips around chanced to see that blush, they might have suspected something from it. It was a good thing Dr. Maude did not.

An excellent chanter was on duty that week, the best chanter of all the minor canons. As those five minor canons in embryo—or at least, in hope—listened to the clear tones of his ringing voice, they trembled for their chance of success. Not one among them would ever become such a chanter as that. "Save Hartley," they repeated to themselves; "he may." Perhaps Mr. Hartley was repeating the same. By the side of Cyrilla Maude sat two of her sisters, and two more were in the

gallery with the governess. Not one resembled her: they all took after the sub-dean; were dark, and cold, and pretentious. Cyrilla alone was like her dead mother.

The service drew to a close. It was rather prolonged that wintry afternoon, for the anthem had been a long one: and when the Bishop rose in his throne to give the blessing, the shades of twilight had gathered in the cathedral.

Under cover of the crowd pressing out, under cover of the friendly darkness, Mr. Hartley grasped and momentarily retained the hand of Miss Maude, as they passed through the choir gates into the transept.

"I have had a letter from Edmund, Cyrilla," he whispered.

"Have you!" she exclaimed in a tone of delight, her blue eyes raised for an instant, and then dropped again, strangely timid, and her face glowing. "How is he?"

"Very well in health; very ill in temper," returned Mr. Hartley, with a half smile. "You remember the storms of indignation he used to fall into? He was in one when he wrote."

"Oh John! At what?"

"At me. Never was such a thing heard of, he protests, as for John Hartley to aspire to a minor canonry. He——"

"*Aspire?*" interrupted Cyrilla.

"To *stoop* to aspire to it, is, I believe, what he would imply," replied Mr. Hartley, with a glance at Cyrilla. "He writes in mockery. He looks upon a minor canonry as a death-blow to all ambitious hopes; and says he would as soon hear that I had got into hot water with the Bishop, and had had my gown threatened."

"That is so like Edmund! But I—I do not think a minor canonry is quite the proper preferment for you," she continued, the glow deepening to a crimson with her inward thoughts: and, possibly, with the construction the words might, to his ear, bear.

"Let us rather say, Cyrilla, it is not the sort of preferment we were fond of carving out for ourselves, I, and Edmund, and Tom Chatterton, in those dear old days at Berton rectory. True. We were all to rise like stars in the firmament, silk aprons being, I verily believe, at the end of the vista. Experience has come to us since. Tom is wearing out his health in the West Indies, preaching to the negroes; I am vegetating upon a hundred a year at my curacy; and Edmund, the best off, has his fellowship and his small college living. And, so far as I am concerned, this state of things seems likely to last for ever. A minor canonry would be an improvement on this: I should, at any rate, be sure of a living with it, large or small, as may be."

"Not large ever. Moderate, at the best."

"Large to us moderate curates," he returned with a smile.

In talking, they had left the college for the cloisters, and were close upon the door of the chapter-house. Dr. Maude, who, with his fellow

canon and the Dean, had been marshalled to it by the bedesmen, in like manner that he had been marshalled from it, came suddenly out, his surplice and hood on still, and his trencher on his head.

A haughty recognition of Mr. Hartley's salutation, a hard and somewhat surprised stare at his daughter greeted them. Cyrilla bowed her adieu to Mr. Hartley, and joined her father. They walked side by side to the west quadrangle and entered their house by a small door opening from the cloisters.

"Where are the rest?" inquired the sub-dean, alluding to his other daughters.

"With the governess, papa. They left the cathedral by the front entrance."

Since Cyrilla was eighteen and had been emancipated from the care of a governess herself—some three or four years ago now—she had been in the habit of spending much time at Berton Rectory. It was about ten miles from Oldchurch. The Rector, Mr. Chatterton, was a plain, unaffected country parson, not in the least like that eminent and grand cathedral light, Dr. Maude, or aspiring to be. The rector's wife and the late Mrs. Maude were sisters, and Cyrilla was a vast favourite at the Rectory. It was much to be feared that Cyrilla's mind, taste, and manners had been formed after her uncle and aunt's simple model: but Dr. Maude did not suspect the heresy yet. John Hartley had had his title to orders at Berton; when the year was ended, he still remained on, Mr. Chatterton's curate. Edmund Maude was also there a great deal, reading with the son, Tom Chatterton, both before college and after it. All three of these young men were at Oxford together, and a great friendship existed between them. Cyrilla naturally saw a good deal of them: and why not? One was her brother, one her cousin, the other—well, he was her uncle's curate. It never would have entered the proud head of Dr. Maude to suppose it possible that any harm could accrue to his daughter from the companionship. He would as soon have supposed Miss Maude capable of stooping to regard with favour her uncle's man of all work, as her uncle's son, or her uncle's curate. And, for the matter of that, Dr. Maude, had he condescended to think about any one so inferior in the social scale as John Hartley, would have assumed that Miss Maude's intercourse with him was limited to the viewing him in the reading-desk on Sundays.

Not so, however. They saw much of each other daily; both were attractive; the usual consequences of such companionship ensued, and they became to each other all too dear. Whether Mr. Hartley or Cyrilla was the first to fall in love, it is of no moment to inquire, and perhaps neither could have told. Certain it was, that love, powerful and lasting, had seized upon them both.

The only one to detect it—and that not at first—was Edmund Maude. He was quite devoid of pride—and in consequence he and his father

did not quite get on together—and he liked John Hartley better than any one else in the world. So that, far from being annoyed, he was ready and willing to countenance the treason, and did so.

"Now, don't you two go open-mouthed to the canon, like geese, Hartley; you and Cyrilla," he suddenly spoke out one day in his abrupt fashion. "If you do, you'll just get yourselves damaged for good. You will be sent to the right about and Mademoiselle to the left. Wait. A tide comes to every man in life, we are told—or ought to come—and when you rise upon yours, Hartley, and I don't think you are a man to be buried all your life under a bushel, a fair share of chance being given you, why then enlighten the doctor. Tell him now that you and Cyrilla would like to pull together in the same boat!—whew! I should not like to stand in your shoes, Hartley, if you did. You do not know Richard Maude, D.D."

Mr. Hartley had probably entertained no more intention of speaking to Dr. Maude than of speaking to the Pope of Rome: under present circumstances he would not have dared to do it: and the address took him by surprise. At least it served to open his eyes. Honourable in his every instinct, he had not dreamt of speaking to Cyrilla. Perhaps he had never looked into the future: the love, and that he could not help, had been enough for him. Neither did he speak now. They tacitly understood each other: when he should get preferment then he would ask for her.

So the years had gone on to the present time. Mr. Hartley was eight-and-twenty; Cyrilla six years younger; and the preferment had not come. He had another curacy now, close to Oldchurch, and he and Cyrilla often met in society. When Edmund Maude was at home—he did pay it an occasional visit—Mr. Hartley would be much at the Prebendal residence. The Doctor—for the Doctor—was gracious to him: as gracious as a high and bedizened butterfly of the church could be to a working curate. Dr. Maude could not have regarded a man without high friends and high interest in any other light than condescendingly. Edmund kept counsel and silence, and the doctor never suspected the dreadful treason going on under his very nose.

Eight-and-twenty years of age now; "going on for thirty," as he was wont to put it to himself; and no sign of preferment! Would it ever come? John Hartley, lacking interest, thought not. The passing years might have seemed longer than they did but for his love for Cyrilla. Men are vain; young men very vain; young clergymen sometimes vainest of all; and it did appear feasible to John Hartley that should a lucky living of five or six hundred a year drop down upon him, Dr. Maude might not refuse him his eldest daughter.

But the luck and the living, I say, did not come. Neither could he disguise from himself that he had no more interest to get it than had a hundred other poor curates in the diocese of Oldchurch. Certainly he was

personally known to the Bishop ; and if he by chance encountered that Right Reverend divine, his lordship would freely nod and say "How are you, Hartley?" But, as to setting him down for a benefice, there appeared to be nothing further from the prelate's thoughts. During this gloomy state of affairs, one of the minor canons died, and Mr. Hartley decided to enter himself as a candidate for the vacant place. A fatal step, so far as his pretensions to Miss Maude went : but John Hartley, a stranger till lately to a cathedral town, knew little of the feeling obtaining amid the high cathedral dignitaries. He could not have placed a surer bar between himself and Cyrilla. Dr. Maude give a daughter to a minor canon ! The Doctor would have thought the world was coming to an end.

Edmund Maude, at home in cathedral politics, knew this. Hence his disapproval of the project. Reared as he had been in the prejudices of a cathedral life, he could but be in a degree imbued with them, in spite of the frankness of his nature ; and he would not like to see a sister of his stoop to marry a minor canon. A country clergyman with ever so small a living, an' she would ; but not one of the lesser clergy attached to Oldchurch cathedral. John Hartley, however, did not see matters in this light. Some of the livings in the gift of the Dean and Chapter for bestowal on the minor canons were good : should one of the good ones be given to him, he fondly thought it might lead to his union with Cyrilla. That he should be the successful candidate for the minor canonry, he had little doubt of, on account of his good voice and his talent for chanting. Success or non-success depended solely on that.

It was the day of the trial for the minor canonry : Tuesday : the time, after morning prayers in the cathedral. The Dean and prebendaries, four, were present, several of the minor canons, the lay-clerks and choristers. The five candidates did their best ; but on the whole the "best" was not very good.

A sorry display made some of those reverend aspirant-chanters. What with their nervousness, and what with their not being fitted by nature with voice and ear, two or three might have stood quite as much chance had they put up for the bishopric. One of them surreptitiously used a tuning fork to pitch the note. But the Reverend John Hartley ? he was different. His voice was of the utmost melody ; it rang into the nooks and corners of the old college. No nervousness betrayed he : he knew, in his calm self-possession, that he could do the work well ; and he did it. "An admirable chanter," remarked the Dean : "one might think he had served his apprenticeship to it." The next best to him was the Reverend Mr. Pope. He held a small living in Oldchurch ; and had been feeling the young chorister boys to be at his house three evenings a week, and practise with him. The result in his case was passable.

or, would have been deemed so, had John Hartley not first been heard.

Of course there could be but one opinion—that the place had been earned by Mr. Hartley; and many congratulated him. As the Dean and Chapter were leaving the cathedral to put off their robes, they met the Bishop in the cloisters. A bishop—it need hardly be said—has nothing to do with the cathedral appointments; neither is it etiquette for him to influence them.

"We have been hearing the candidates for the minor canonry," remarked the Dean, who was an elderly man. "Young Hartley carries the palm, by a long way."

"Your lordship would be surprised to hear him," added Mr. Lane. "There's not a better chanter in the college."

"He'll do, he'll do," said the Bishop, assuming that Mr. Hartley was fixed upon. "An orthodox young fellow, is Hartley; clever too: got his head set on his shoulders the right way."

II.

COLD, and still, and silent, lay the old cloisters in the moonlight. Not that much moonlight could get at *them*; but it fell brightly on the graveyard they enclosed; on the dank green grass, and the worn tombstones.

Pacing in that ghostly spot, over the flat gravestones sunk in the cloisters, the inscriptions on which had worn away with time, was the Reverend John Hartley; the light not sufficient to show him which were the red bricks of the cloisters, which the grey slabs of the dead. Do you cavil at the word, ghostly? Go and try it. Get yourself shut into the cloisters at Oldchurch some night: with the ponderous Gothic building around you; the popular superstitions—or, associations, if you like the word better—connected with the hour and place; the ominous silence, telling upon the nerves; the heavy bell aloft, which every quarter booms out the fitting time; the dead, mouldering around and beneath; the snatches of moonlight, flickering upon the white graves in the open yard, and entering through the mullioned casements! Not a soul within hearing, not a soul within call; ghostly and grim it is altogether.

The clock rang out the three quarters past five. As the echo of it died away, another sound arose; and Mr. Hartley arrested his monotonous steps to listen. It was what he was waiting for. Mr. Lane's door opened—for that prebendal residence had likewise a door conducting into the cloisters, it being on the east side, or opposite to Dr. Maude's. The door opened and shut; and then fleet, light footsteps were heard coming round towards where he stood: footsteps that John Hartley loved all too well.

"Cyrilla!"

Softly as the word was spoken, it yet startled her to terror: she had not caught its familiar tones. A faint cry, and she sprang to the wall of the narrow cloister. Mr. Hartley caught hold of her in his reassuring, strong protection.

"Forgive me, Cyrilla. I never meant to startle you."

"Oh John! What brings you here at this hour? I thought—I thought——"

Her heart was beating violently with the alarm, and she stopped to gather breath. Mr. Hartley laughed.

"Thought it was one of the dead-and-gone monks, come out of his sleep to molest you? I was in the precincts at dusk, and saw you go into Mr. Lane's house with his daughter. Logic whispered that you might probably run home through the cloisters, in preference to going round: and I came in and waited, dodging the cloister-porter when he shuffled in to lock the gates."

"Dodging the—why, yes! They are shut at dusk in winter! John, you must be locked in!" she exclaimed, in consternation. "How ever shall you get out?"

"I must trust to luck for it: luck has stood my friend in worse predicaments than this. You will stay with me five minutes?" he continued, placing her arm within his, and commencing slowly to pace the cloister.

A pause. Her heart—beating though it was, with the sense of happiness—whispered that it was not quite the thing to do. "Ought you to ask it of me, John? It would not be right."

"Not right!" he echoed. "Where is the wrong? Who would protect you from harm, as I would?—No man living. You know it, Cyrilla."

"It is not that," she hastily replied. "But—oh, if any one should come and see me here!"

"How can they?—with the cloisters locked for the night! I have been trying to see you all day, Cyrilla. I received another letter from Edmund this morning. Did you also get one?"

Had that moonlight shone on them, instead of on the gravestones, Mr. Hartley would have seen the bright blush that the question called up on her cheeks. She made no answer.

"Did you, Cyrilla?"

Still no reply. She walked by his side with her head down, as if mindful of where she placed her feet.

"A terrible bug-bear, this minor canonry business is to Edmund," resumed Mr. Hartley. "He urges the bar it will be to other preferment. And he does not—he says he does not," repeated Mr. Hartley pointedly, "object to it so strongly on the score of its own merits or demerits, or altogether for my own sake."

Thump, thump, went Cyrilla's heart against her side. She understood all perfectly well: yet what was she to answer?

"Therefore, Cyrilla, I determined to appeal to you—were it possible that I could see you in time; and ask you to decide. Hence my way-laying you in this uncereemonious, and, I fear you think, unpardonable fashion. You may have heard the result of the trial this morning—that I am sure of the place: the Dean and Chapter as good as said so, thanks to my chanting. If you would prefer me not to take it, I will go this night to the Dean, and say that I withdraw from the competition. Decide for me, Cyrilla."

"I see no objection to the minor canonry," she replied, in a low tone: and she spoke as she felt, for in truth Cyrilla was humbled-minded. "Only——" She came to a standstill.

"Only that you fear it will be a stumbling-block in the sight of Dr. Maude. It is Edmund's implied argument, Cyrilla; I must speak plainly: though you may deem it not generous of me to do so, here and now. It is but a word that I will say. You know that my whole heart is bent upon one hope; that I am ever working on for its realization; and you know what that hope is. There; that is all: I will not say another word, until I can say it to a purpose. What shall I do about the minor canonry?"

"I think you should accept it. Edmund did write to me. But it is cruel of anyone to wish you to starve on as you are doing, on a hundred a year."

"Never mind the starving," he interrupted. "It is not that which troubles me. But, years are wearing on. Some of the minor canons hold better livings than your uncle's at Berton: the best of them come up to five or six hundred a year. And one, report says, reaches seven."

"Yes; they do, John: they are very good. And perhaps—perhaps papa would see that they are."

"And I could resign the minor canonry at any time if higher preferment offered. Do not deem me mercenary, Cyrilla, in calculating these chances," he continued, in a pained tone, "or think I regard them as the end of what a minister of God should work for. But a man must live—and his wife also."

"I would take the minor canonry, John: yes, I think I would, and chance it. And——"

"Who goes there, pray?"

The words, shouted out almost close to them, were in the terrible voice—terrible to their ears then—of Dr. Maude. He had stayed in the chapter-house after afternoon service, to consult one of its ponderous folios, had lighted the solitary candle, kept there, and remained, poring over the volume, until reminded by his hunger that the dinner hour must be at hand. He then blew out the light, and came forth. They, those two lovers on the opposite side of the cloisters, buried in their own affairs, their untold love, had never heard him. The Doctor had no idea, when, on turning the angle, he distinguished the intruders, that

they were—who they were. But he called out angrily: for no one, save the great college lights, like himself, had any business in the cloisters at that hour.

It was a scene of confused surprise: and the moonlight just then was very bright. Cyrilla, nearly fainting with dismay, would have quitted Mr. Hartley's arm, but he did not let her. "Better so," he whispered; "he must hear all now." As to the Doctor, for once in his life he was too much astonished even to storm.

John Hartley, his tall form drawn to its full height, briefly explained. He was a gentleman always: and gentlemen do not cower, even before a sub-dean. The blame was his; not Miss Maude's, he said. He had been in the cloisters a few minutes ago, had seen Miss Maude running across them on her way home from Mr. Lane's, and detained her. And then he entered on the story of his love and his hopes.

"What is it that you say?" gasped the Doctor. "That you—that you—presume——" He broke off from lack of words.

"That I love her, sir. That I have loved her ever since we were so much together at Berton—that my most earnest prayer is, to be worthy of her, and to win her."

"Let me pass," panted the Doctor, his face purple and crimson, his hair standing right on end under his trencher. "As for you, degenerate girl! you may choose between me and him."

She burst into tears. "Oh, papa! I——"

"Sir, I have assured you that no blame attaches to Miss Maude. She is perfectly dutiful, and willing to wait——"

"Will you go home?" stamped the Doctor to his daughter, waving off Mr. Hartley with contemptuous scorn; drowning his words; shrinking from him in his hauteur as he might have shrunk from some worthless miscreant. "To your home, I say, Miss Maude."

Cyrilla, her sobs bursting, pushed open the door and entered. The sub-dean was following in her wake.

"Will you not condescend to give me a reply, sir?" interposed John Hartley.

"A reply to you! How dare you, fellow? Begone!"

It was all the answer Dr. Maude vouchsafed. He slammed the door in Mr. Hartley's face, leaving him to his fate in the cold cloisters. Striding along the passage after his daughter, he caught her by the arm and whirled her into his study.

"Oh papa, papa, why should you be so angry?" she ventured to cry, the tears streaming from her eyes. "What harm has he done? He is of gentle birth; he is a learned and a good man; and he will not always be a curate."

Dr. Maude almost fought for breath. "A curate?" said he, in his bitter contempt. "He is going to be a minor canon!"

Cyrilla's heart rose against the implied contumely. "Papa, a minor

canon may do his duty before God, as truly as a dean. Oh, sir, do be just! Mr. Hartley does not deserve your displeasure: indeed he does not."

The sub-dean stared at her. Cyrilla! who had always done his bidding in meekness!—who was the most dutiful of all his children!—she, to beard him! "Possibly you were contemplating a union with this minor canon?" foamed the Doctor.

Her cheeks grew red through her tears.

"Answer me."

"Had he obtained a sufficient living, he might have asked me to become his wife. My doing so would have depended upon your consent, papa."

The sub-dean opened his mouth and closed it again; he did not know whether to believe his ears. "Marry a minor canon!" he thundered. "Are you mad?"

"Papa, you need not fear," she sobbed. "I would not marry him without your approbation: neither would he take me."

"He would take my curse if he did. Both of you would take it."

"Oh, do not, do not!" she said in a wailing tone, putting her hand before her eyes. "I can give him up without that. Papa, I have said that it depended only on you."

"Very well, Cyrilla; I take you at your word," was the rejoinder, sternly but less angrily expressed. "Let it end from this night. A father's curse is an unholy thing: do not you provoke it."

She was leaving the room; when all the future desolation that she now must enter upon rose up vividly before her mind. She turned back; her hands clasped, and speaking slowly and softly.

"There is no one else I can ever care for in the world. Papa, is there *no* medium? Will you not say a word of hope—that, in years to come, should preferment be his——"

"Preferment for him!" interrupted the sub-dean. "Preferment for a man without connections and interest?—the kind of preferment that would entitle him to aspire to a canon's daughter! Is it likely that such will ever be his? You know it is not. Our minor canons must wed in their own sphere."

A sobbing sigh caught her breath. She knew that hope was over. "He is——"

"I tell you to think no more of him, Cyrilla," again came the stern interruption. "Never more, under pain of—you heard the penalty."

"I will obey you, papa: you know I will. I was only about to say that he is locked up in the cloisters: the gates were shut, he said. Will you not send a servant to tell the porter?"

This was the climax. The Doctor firmly closed his lips to prevent their further explosion, and pointed to the staircase. The unhappy girl shivered as she went slowly up it.

And for the Doctor's anger there was much excuse to be made. He deemed that Mr. Hartley's conduct in regard to his daughter had been mean, dishonourable, bad. How dared he, an obscure and portionless curate, dream of aspiring to an alliance with Cyrilla? Why, even this evening, the fellow must have put himself into the cloisters to waylay her! Which was true.

"Send to tell the porter, indeed!—Let him get out as he got in!" spoke the sub-dean.

Dr. Maude sat down to his dinner with a damaged appetite. Cyrilla did not appear at it. She was the only one who took dinner with the Doctor; her sisters dined with the governess. When he had finished, he sat awhile, and then betook himself to the deanery, and to the houses of the canons who were in town. What was his business there?

The decision, as to the minor canonry, was announced on the following day, and became patent to Oldchurch. It was conferred upon the Reverend William Pope, M.A. Mr. Hartley was passed over: his name was not so much as mentioned. Those not in the secret were thunder-struck: none more so than Mr. Pope himself.

"I understood you to say that Hartley was the best man," observed the Bishop to Mr. Lane, when they chanced to meet in the afternoon.

"So he was, in regard to chanting," was the canon's answer. "But, at the eleventh hour, Dr. Maude spoke of some private objection to Hartley, and put it to us, as a personal favour to himself, not to elect him. Pope will do very well. He will chant better when he gets used to it.

Now it fell out that, within an hour after this, the Bishop encountered Mr. Hartley, who was digesting the news of his rejection; as well as that of another rejection, conveyed to him in a letter from Cyrilla. The Bishop stopped him. Never a pleasanter prelate than he; never one, in manner, less formal or more friendly. He was the first, or one of the first, of the bishops that discarded the wig: some of his reverend brethren looked askance at him for it. Some of them thought him rather "light" for a bishop. At a certain musical festival, held at Oldchurch, a certain prima donna, gay and fascinating, was engaged to sing. The Bishop strolled in to the rehearsal, and passed his time agreeably, listening to the music, and chattering between whiles to Madame. "Of course you will go to the ball?" said he, alluding to the fête with which the festival would conclude. "Ah, no," responded Madame. "I shall have enough of *fa-tigue* without that." "But you ought to go," returned his lordship, gallantly: "what will the ball be without you?" "I will go," said Madame, "if your lordship will come also, and promise to waltz with me." No great harm, all this: it was his lordship's way. He was thoroughly liked by all around him. Never a more popular prelate than was he of Oldchurch:

"What's this, Hartley?" cried the Bishop. "How have you contrived to get into the black books of the Dean and Chapter?"

Mr. Hartley blushed like a lady. "I fancy it is with one of the Chapter only, my lord."

"Well—what's the reason?"

"It has nothing to do with clerical affairs, my lord. Nothing whatever to do with my fitness, or unfitness, for the post. I offended Dr. Maude in a private matter—and I conclude he has not allowed me to be elected."

"A private matter?" debated the Bishop. "Perhaps," he continued, noting the changing complexion of the handsome young curate, and remembering that he had sometimes seen him with Dr. Maude's daughter, and he laughed as he spoke, "perhaps you have been aspiring to Miss Maude—as well as to the minor canonry—and the Doctor does not like it?"

No need for John Hartley to say Yes, or No: his conscious face betrayed him. He saw that the Bishop read the signs correctly: and in his pain he spoke words that he might not otherwise have spoken.

"Dr. Maude might look further for a suitor and fare worse than in me, my lord; so far as a true and honest heart goes."

"So he might, Hartley, I do believe. Well, I must bear you in mind for something else—as the Dean and Chapter have rejected you."

"I beg your lordship's pardon—I think I shall leave the town: go somewhere to a distance. I do not care to remain here now."

The Bishop looked at him. The Bishop was evidently pondering something in his mind. "I wonder," he said, "what sort of a tutor you would make? You took honours at Oxford, I think?"

"I am pleased that your lordship should remember it."

"A friend has asked me to recommend him a resident tutor for his son. Suppose you call at the palace, and I will talk to you further. Let me see?—come to-morrow morning at half-past nine."

John Hartley thanked his lordship, lifted his hat, and the Bishop passed on. He did not fail to attend at the palace: and the result was, that in less than a fortnight's time, he had obtained the tutorship, which was in the family of the Earl of Saxonby, and had resigned his curacy.

It was a chilly evening. Miss Maude was seated over the fire after dinner—which she had taken alone, for the sub-dean had gone to the great audit feast at the deanery—and shivering slightly. For the past week or two she had been unaccountably given to shiver. She was dwelling upon her unhappy fate, perhaps somewhat rebelling at it, when the door opened and Mr. Hartley was shown in. He had come to the house with as bold a face as the Bishop himself might have come: but Cyrilla started up in consternation.

"I have called to take my leave of you, Cyrilla. Dr. Maude would scarcely grudge us so much as that."

She stood, looking from him to the misty fire, misty through her tears. "It was wrong to come, John. I promised never, willingly, to see you again; never to speak to you. I *had* to promise it."

"Never is a long day," he replied, standing by her on the hearth-rug. "If I know anything of you, Cyrilla, you will be true to me in your inmost heart; you cannot help it; you could not, if you would. When time and chance shall have worked things round, and I, poor, despised, rejected, now, shall have risen to a position that will justify my coming here to ask again for you, even in the opinion of Dr. Maude—and some conviction is within me that I shall so rise—I mean to come. I want you, Cyrilla, to give me the hope that I *may* come. It will cheer me on my way."

"I dare not," she whispered.

"Understand me, Cyrilla. I am not asking you to disobey Dr. Maude and engage yourself to me. I would not ask it. This only I say: that when I am in a position to satisfy even him—if I ever shall be so and you are still unmarried—that you will cancel the harsh note you wrote to me——"

"I wrote by his command," she interrupted.

"Of course: I understand that. Cyrilla, do you know that I have loved you above every earthly thing? Not a moment of the day for years, but you have occupied my thoughts; not a dream of the night, but you have filled it!"

"As you have mine," she cried, wringing her hands, and speaking freely in the moment's anguish. "To part from you is like parting from life. Oh John! I could not say it but for this dreadful parting."

The tears were raining from her eyes. John Hartley forgot himself in the moment's anguish and drew her head to his shoulder.

"What will the world be to us without one another, Cyrilla?"

"Don't tempt me, John. I must be true to my duty."

"My darling, I do not wish to tempt you. I do not ask your promise to be mine; I do not even ask you to keep unmarried for my sake: I dare not in honour. What I do ask is this—that should the favourable time and circumstances ever come, and you be still free, and Dr. Maude not then object, I may come again and woo you."

"I tell you that I may not," she repeated in a tone of anguish—and it seemed that she scarcely understood him clearly, and she withdrew from him and stood near the mantel-piece. "I must forget you as I best may. How can I disobey my father?"

The words chilled him. "Say you will not."

Her sobs nearly choked her. He would have taken her hands again but she waved him off. She had ever been an obedient daughter, and in this, her bitter trial, she would not fail now. Mr. Hartley felt his anger rising. Disappointment, vexation, mortified love, rendered him unjust. In the haste and trouble of the moment he began to

think she could not love him, perhaps never had loved him; and his face turned pale.

"I ask for the last time, Cyrilla. As you deal with me, so will I deal with you. Reject my prayer, and I will strive to put your image from my heart—as you have just boasted to me you will strive to put me out of yours."

Her heart felt as though it were breaking. She leaned against the wall by the mantel-piece and pressed her hands upon her bosom. But she could not press down its pain.

"I have no resource, John; none. I must not disobey my father."

"Fare you well then, Cyrilla," he quietly said. "If ever we meet again it will be as strangers."

And the next moment he had gone from the room, a bitter smile upon his lips. Gone from her for ever! Cyrilla buried her head on the sofa pillows in her despair, almost wishing she might never look up again. And that was the manner of their parting.

Oldchurch supposed the Reverend Mr. Hartley had quitted the place in mortification at his non-success as to the minor canonry. A few weeks, and he was forgotten.

PART THE SECOND.

THE DEAN OF OLDCHURCH.

TEN years! What a slice it seems to take out of the history of a life! Ten weary years!—and the heart preying upon itself, its sorrows, and its blighted hopes, all that long while!

The cathedral bell at Oldchurch rang out for afternoon week-day service; and a few stragglers, half a dozen at the most, came leisurely towards the cloisters.

Pacing what was called the Green Walk—a convenient promenade hard by, near the deanery and the prebendal houses—was a fair, attractive-looking woman with a sweet, sad face. The smooth, open brow was indented with two upright middle lines, that unmistakable sign of care; they had not used to be there; and the blue eyes wore an expression that told their owner lived much in the inward life. She was not much more than thirty; she did not look to be; nevertheless her hair had begun to be streaked with silver. It was Cyrilla Maude. Ten years have passed over her head since that great trouble fell upon her; and ten years make a change.

There were other changes, too, at Oldchurch. The pleasant Bishop had passed away. He had been translated, not to a better appointment; not to be Primate of all England, or even to one of the three desirable sees, but to a Land where mitres are not. Bishops, for the most part, live to a good old age; he, of Oldchurch, had died young—comparing him with some of those very ancient ones, who seem to

last out for ever. The ultra grave men of the Prelates' Bench had turned upon him rather the cold-shoulder, royal favourite though he was. But he was gone ; and another filled his place ; an austere man, who gave a frown where the late Bishop had given a smile, and who looked sharply after the loaves and fishes. Oldchurch did not think it had gained by the change.

The Dean lived yet ; but the great change for him was approaching ; in fact, his death had been for sometime looked for almost daily. Two of the prebendaries had also passed away ; one had been removed to a deanery : and their stalls were filled up by others. Dr. Maude was no longer the sub-dean ; he had resigned the office, and Mr. Lane had taken it ; not by any means a sinecure at present from the incapacity of the Dean. Two or three of the old minor canons had likewise dropped off. Mr. Pope had become really a good chanter, and was Sacrist to the cathedral. Which naturally brings us to John Hartley.

There was the greatest change ! Sure, none had risen in the social scale like he. Some such examples are not wanting ; as those who keep their eyes upon the moves of the clerical chess-table, well know. The tutorship, procured for him by the ready kindness and influence of the late Bishop, was in the family of the Earl of Saxonby, a cabinet minister and shining star in the political horizon. The Earl had a great many daughters ; and only one son, Viscount Weyford. Daughter after daughter had been born, until the Earl and Countess despaired of a son ; so that when he did arrive, he was made much of. A wayward boy in his twelfth year, when Mr. Hartley was engaged ; whose duty it was to prepare him for Eton. Mr. Hartley was regarded as a gentleman in the Earl's family, was treated as one of themselves ; and when the Earl's chaplain was inducted to something better, he was appointed chaplain in his place. His rise then was rapid. Perhaps it might not have been quite so much so but for Lady Charlotte Saxonby. She contrived to fall in love with Mr. Hartley ; and he—if he did not love her as he had once loved Cyrilla Maude—liked her very much. The Earl sanctioned the match. When a man, peer though he may be, has six girls upon his hands, the settlement of one of them with a young clergyman, whose preferment he can take care of, is not to be despised. Five years subsequent to the period of his leaving Oldchurch, the Reverend John Hartley was enjoying a living of twelve hundred a year, and a stall in a cathedral. Not only that. His name stood high in public fame as one of the cleverest men of the day ; a sound divine, and most able preacher.

What thought Dr. Maude then ? The man he had so despised had risen in this short time to be a canon like himself. If by chance they met in the world now, they would meet on equal ground ; divines of the same social standing. He who had been rejected for Miss Maude with so much unnecessary contempt, had been welcomed for the Lady

Charlotte Saxonby. And poor Cyrilla? She would only hear, and bear in silence; but it had lined her brow and silvered her hair. Dr. Maude may have felt a qualm when he gazed on her pale, sad face; if so, he did not let it appear; but he growled angrily at her when she rejected an offer of marriage. It was a very eligible one; but Cyrilla meekly declined it.

The rest of the Miss Maudes had married; all of them; Cyrilla was the only one left. "That old maid, Cyrilla Maude!" The daughters in the precincts, who had been children when she was a girl of twenty, called her now. She seemed to have outlived her companions; they had married, and were dispersed in the world. Mary Lane, her chief friend, had gone too. Younger sisters had sprung up; but they and Cyrilla seemed to have no sympathy, nothing in common the one with the other.

Dr. Maude's second daughter, Caroline, had married very young; it was just after Mr. Hartley quitted Oldchurch, when she was scarcely out of the schoolroom; a marriage quite after the sub-dean's own heart. The bridegroom was a colonel, forty years at least older than his bride; but he made a good settlement on her, and he was a K.C.B. He carried her off to India, and soon rose to be a general. Lady Hume was at home now, paying a long visit to her father, with her three children; a gay, dashing, scornful woman, who put upon Cyrilla, and turned the care of her children over to her. Personal happiness denied her, Cyrilla was trying to make her own unselfish happiness in the caring for others. She engaged in works of benevolence, of usefulness. Did any old bedesman, or his poor old wife, fall sick, they found a true friend in Miss Maude. When other ladies of the precincts were wasting their time in that utter waste of all wastes, morning visits, Miss Maude would be paying visits too. But they were visits of a different nature. The image of John Hartley was often present to her. When one has loved as Cyrilla did, the beloved one is not easily displaced from the heart; but she only thought of him as one utterly lost to her, whom she should never again see in this world. She pictured to herself his happy life with his wife; and a sore feeling would now and then intrude, for she could not help thinking that in the blaze of his new fortunes he might have sought *her* again instead of Lady Charlotte Saxonby.

What a blessing this life would be, if we could keep from it sickness, and care, and sorrow! They come to the rich as well as to the poor. Of sickness, I am not quite sure but the rich get the largest share. It came in its most ominous guise to Lady Charlotte Hartley. After the birth of her little girl, she never grew strong; and symptoms of consumption supervened. Dr. Hartley—he had taken his degree; some honorary post having been conferred upon him at Oxford, which necessitated it—obtained leave from his bishop, and accompanied his wife

to a warmer climate in the Pyrenees, to which she had been ordered. Dr. Hartley came back alone: his wife was left in her foreign grave. He had been at home some eighteen months now, chiefly residing in his prebendal house at the distant cathedral.

The bell was going for service, and Cyrilla Maude paced the Green Walk. Lady Hume's troublesome children were running and racing, making a great noise; the yellow leaves of the elm trees fell about her, for it was autumn weather. Cyrilla's eyes were raised frequently to the windows of the house nearest her; that of Mr. Lane. Mary Lane—Mrs. Wilkinson by her new title—had arrived at home the previous day, and Cyrilla was wishing she would come out. Her husband was H.B.M. consul, somewhere in the South of France, and Mary had come to England for a short visit.

"Are you going to service this afternoon, Cyrilla?"

Cyrilla turned at the sharp question—which came from her sister, Lady Hume: a tall imperious woman now, dressed in rare satins and gold bracelets. Throw a surplice over her, and put her hair inside a trencher with its hanging tassel, and she might have been taken for a photograph of Dr. Maude himself.

"No," replied Cyrilla, "I have to take care of the children."

"Where's the nurse?" asked Lady Hume.

"Her cold is so much worse this afternoon that I told her to lie down."

"I declare you are growing quite absurd, Cyrilla!" flashed Lady Hume. "As if servants wanted to lie down, or should be allowed to if they did!"

"Do not let it trouble you, Caroline: I will take care of the children."

Lady Hume sailed away: some freak had induced her to attend service that afternoon, but it was what she rarely did on week days. The bell ceased, and the deadened notes of the organ might be faintly distinguished. They were very tiresome, these spoilt children, but Cyrilla knew that they would be worse in-doors, and she walked about with them for nearly an hour. At length Mary Wilkinson saw her, and came out. They sat down on one of the benches, and the children ran about the grass, quarrelling and picking weeds.

"Does it not seem like old times for you and me to be seated here, watching the noisy crows, and hearing the organ strike up?" began Mrs. Wilkinson.

"I wish you could be always here, Mary," was the answer.

"How is it you do not marry?" was Mary Wilkinson's abrupt rejoinder. "I thought you, of all girls, would have married well."

A faint colour tinged Cyrilla's cheek. Emotion upon that subject had well-nigh died away. "Some are destined to marry, and some are not," she said with a sad smile. "I suppose I am one of the latter."

"Nonsense! you will marry yet."

"Never," replied Cyrilla, more vehemently than the subject might seem to warrant. "I shall never marry."

"Never is a long day," laughed Mrs. Wilkinson: and Cyrilla's remembrance went back. They were the very words said to her by John Hartley in their last interview, when he had quitted her in anger. How many a time since had it been in Cyrilla's thoughts—Had she allowed him the hope he craved, would he have come to claim her?

"Do you remember John Hartley?" suddenly asked Mrs. Wilkinson. And the question was so very apposite to what was just then passing in Cyrilla's mind that it struck her into silence.

"The young curate who was at Benton once, and afterwards tried for a minor canonry," proceeded Mrs. Wilkinson, supposing Cyrilla's memory needed to be refreshed, and never noticing the vivid blush on the worn cheeks.

"Yes, I do remember him," was the quiet answer.

"I saw a good deal of him and his wife abroad. Poor Lady Charlotte, a delicate, interesting woman, was in a consumption when they came. Dr. Hartley told me that he brought her quite as a forlorn hope. How he rose! Only picture it, Cyrilla! the position he holds now, and his trying for a humble minor canonry not so many years ago! 'There is a tide in the affairs of man:' he must have taken his at flood time, if anyone ever did."

"Did you like Lady Charlotte?" was the low rejoinder.

"It was impossible not to like her. She was aware how little hope remained, and the prospect of leaving her husband and child was the greatest grief to her. She lingered nearly a twelvemonth after they came out. She has been dead—oh, going on for two years now."

"Was he much altered—Mr. Hartley?"

"Dr. Hartley, Cyrilla," laughed Mrs. Wilkinson: "don't you forget his honours. Very little altered indeed. Just the same free, unaffected man that he was as a curate. He asked me if I recollected his rejection at Oldchurch by the Dean and Chapter. Lady Charlotte made him tell her the story. I remember his saying, 'Ah, Charlotte, had I been successful then, I should never have married you?'"

"Service is over: they are coming out of college," broke in Cyrilla.

So they were: by stragglers, as they went into it. Lady Hume came up to them.

"We were talking of Dr. Hartley," Mrs. Wilkinson remarked to her.

"How strangely he has got on! But it is of course owing to his father-in-law, Lord Saxonby."

"Cyrilla's old flame," returned Lady Hume.

"Caroline!" remonstrated Cyrilla, with a burning face.

Mary Wilkinson looked at them; at the one, and at the other. Cyrilla's confused look puzzled her. "You do not mean to say there was ever anything between him and Cyrilla!" she impulsively uttered.

"Something there undoubtedly was," said Lady Hume. "I cannot tell you what. I fancy there would have been more, but that papa discovered it."

"If there was anything, why did he not come back and claim Cyrilla when he could do it?" cried Mrs. Wilkinson. "Why have married Charlotte Saxonby?"

She, Cyrilla, escaped to the screaming children. Lady Hume, replying to the question, threw back her head, very much after the manner of the ex-sub-dean.

"He would not have dared to come. A man who had put up for one of our minor canons, would never have the assurance really to offer himself to a canon's daughter."

"Oh Caroline! that's just like you!" laughed Mary Wilkinson. "I would not be as proud as you for the world. Hark!"

The cathedral death bell struck out, and went booming over the city. Three times three, and some quick strokes after it in succession; betokening that a soul had just passed to its account. It was not a familiar sound, for that bell did not condescend to toll for ordinary mortals; and the three ladies stood transfixed.

"The passing bell!" exclaimed Cyrilla, scarcely above her breath. "It—I fear—it must be for the Dean!"

With one accord, they turned their eyes on the deanery windows. The blinds were being drawn down: little need to inquire further. But at that moment the senior sexton was emerging from the cloisters, and they made a sign to him. He came up, touching his hat.

"Yes, ladies, it is tolling for the Dean. He died ten minutes ago."

II.

Never, sure, was there the like commotion in any staid cathedral as that which suddenly burst on Oldchurch! The news, startling it to its centre, came to it one morning some two or three weeks subsequent to the death of the Dean.

He, poor old man, had been buried with all honours, many of the canons coming to Oldchurch to attend the funeral. Once under the ground he was of course forgotten, according to the custom of this world, and Oldchurch, especially its clergy, busied itself with speculations as to his successor. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi!*

The fortunate man was generally expected to be Dr. Maude. Dr. Maude himself entertained no doubt whatever on the point. Albeit scarcely usual to raise a canon of a cathedral to be its dean, there were reasons for believing it would be done in this instance. Dr. Maude looked upon the post as already his; and he held up his head higher than before (if that could well be), and hardly allowed his buckled shoes to touch the ground, as he trod Oldchurch streets. "Dean Maude!" he fondly repeated over to himself

again and again; and the sound was as the sweetest incense to his soul.

"Has the appointment come?" asked Mr. Lane, abruptly breaking in upon the Doctor one evening with the question, as he sat over his wine after dinner. "Have you received it?"

"No; not yet," replied the Doctor eagerly. "Why?"

"I've just seen it in one of the evening papers. It states that the appointment is made; but no names are mentioned."

"It's on its way, no doubt," said the Doctor; "those papers always get hold of things first. Sit down, Lane, and take some wine. We shall get news in the morning."

The Doctor was right. News came in by the morning post. The new Dean was named. But it was not Dr. Maude that the Chapter of Oldchurch was recommended to elect as its head; it was John Hartley, D.D.

You cannot wonder at the commotion. At the commotion that ensued in the Chapter-House; or at the internal commotion which racked the mind and fizzed in the brain of Dr. Maude. It was more than a morning's wonder.

But the Chapter had no thought of rebelling against the mandate. Dr. Hartley was not a man to be despised for his own sake, and he had a powerful friend in that great personage, the Earl of Saxonby, who could make deans with a movement of his little finger. John Hartley stood high amidst the clergy; he had made the world respect him; and the Chapter of Oldchurch cathedral generally regarded the appointment with complacency; looking upon that little interlude of his putting up for a subordinate post under them, some ten years before, as a sort of romance in life's history. But, Dr. Maude? In the first place, he was grievously disappointed; had even the Archbishop of Canterbury chosen to constitute himself Dean of Oldchurch, Dr. Maude would have resented it as a personal grievance. In the second place, a canon likes to stand well with his dean. But how would his new dean regard *him*?—how would he resent the contempt, the scorn, once lavished upon him with unnecessary bitterness? Take it for all in all, Dr. Maude was not in a state of jovial merriment.

Cyrilla had gone forth that morning to see the bedridden mother of one of the vergers. The verger, returning to his home after morning service, met Cyrilla as she was quitting it.

"So the new Dean is coming at last, ma'am!" he said, when his bow was over.

"The new Dean!" echoed Cyrilla, somewhat startled, for she had been aware of the expectations of Dr. Maude.

"The news, ma'am, has took everybody by surprise. We should have guessed at anybody rather than him. He is not strange to the college—though he never thought to be dean of it, I'll answer. I

mind him well, Miss Maude ; especially when we were going to have him for one of the minor canons ; and did not, after all ! ”

“ Who is it ? ” asked the wondering Cyrilla.

“ It’s Dr. Hartley, ma’am ; young Hartley as we’d used to call him then. If he’s only half as pleasant now, he’ll be the most popular dean Oldchurch has ever known. There’s a dozen women, pretty well, clearing out the deanery, for fear it should not be ready for him.”

The man talked on, but Cyrilla heard him not. John Hartley coming there as Dean !

It was even so. Verily, as the canons said to one another, it was more like a romance than an episode of real life.

Dr. Hartley arrived at Oldchurch in due course, the deanery having been made ready for him. He came on a Saturday evening, too late for any of the clergy to see him that night. All the ten prebendaries were at Oldchurch ; having assembled not only to elect and welcome their new Dean, but because it was the time of the November audit. It was understood that the Dean should read himself in at morning service, and the cathedral was crowded as it had rarely been.

Once more, as connected with this little history, the bedesmen stood at the chapter door ; once more, they bent their bodies in reverence, as the clergy came forth into the cloisters. *He* was at their head, John Hartley, wearing his white robes and the scarlet badge of a Doctor of Divinity ; carrying his trencher in his hand, and a small roll of paper, or parchment. But for the greatest effort, Cyrilla would have burst into hysterical tears, as the procession came on and entered the choir, marshalled by the vergers and bedesmen. The lay-clerks and college boys, the minor canons, the prebendaries, and the Bishop, who happened to be at Oldchurch. The people stood up ; the organ pealed out the strains of the Halleluiahs chorus. Upon reaching the Dean’s stall, the Bishop turned half round and bowed his head, perhaps to indicate to its new occupant that it was his—as if John Hartley did not know !—and then passed on to his throne. The canons stood round, waiting while he stepped into it—he, John Hartley ! All this pomp and ceremony for him ! Cyrilla glanced at him. Some lines of silver streaked his hair ; but his face had not much altered. He appeared to look taller ; certainly he was more noble and commanding. In the pew underneath him, sat a lady of some forty years. It was understood to be Lady Elizabeth Saxonby, the eldest sister of his late wife. She had been much with him since that lady’s death, for the sake of the little motherless girl.

There was no chanting that memorable day. The Dean read the prayers and lessons. A sonorous voice was his. And when the prayers were over, he unrolled the parchment, and read out his title and his appointment. “ I, John Hartley, Doctor of Divinity,” &c., &c. Did he call to mind the time when he had sat by the minor canons,

aspiring only to be made one of *them*? Ay, that he did; and so did Dr. Maude. Next, he went to the Communion-table, preceded by those bowing bedesmen, six of them, and followed by Dr. Maude and Mr. Pope; taking his own place at its head, and reading the Commandments. Yes, from that day forward, he, John Hartley, was the head and master of Oldhurch cathedral. He did not preach; it was not his place that day to do so; it was Dr. Maude's. And the Doctor, swallowing his mortification, and eating humble-pie, gave a very good doctrinal sermon. But for the unfortunate fact that he was taking his close residence, the Doctor might possibly have had a cold that Sunday, and stayed away from service. He had decided, however, to put a good face on the matter, and welcome the new Dean. It would never have done to let his resentment appear.

"Are you friendly with the Dean, papa?" Lady Hume inquired of her father that night. Cyrilla would not have dared to ask it.

"Friendly?" retorted the Doctor, in a lofty tone of surprise, as if he had always been on terms of brotherly love with John Hartley—for if he did have to eat humble-pie, the world was not to see it go down. "What should hinder it, pray? The Dean was remarkably cordial to-day, and inquired particularly after the health and welfare of my family." The plain fact of the matter being, that the Dean had been as polite to Dr. Maude, as he was to the Chapter generally. He certainly did say, "I hope your family are well, Dr. Maude."

"You and Cyrilla must call on Lady Elizabeth to-morrow," went on the Doctor.

Cyrilla lifted her eyes with a start. "*I* call, papa!"

The canon gave her one of his haughty stares. "Of course. I cannot allow my family to be wanting in courtesy to that of Lord Saxonby."

Cyrilla, however, did not go. Delicately sensitive and refined, she shrank from the bare idea of meeting the Dean incidentally; how, then, could she go, boldfaced, to his house? Lady Hume proceeded thither alone in state in the Doctor's carriage, in her satins and her bracelets, doing duty for the family collectively. A coldly imperious woman looked she; and Lady Elizabeth found her to be such.

"You would like her sister better," remarked Mrs. Wilkinson, who had come in as Lady Hume was departing—for the deanery was besieged that day; the Dean was a free man, remember. "No two sisters can well be more unlike than are Lady Hume and Miss Maude."

"Oh, poor thing, she is quiet to a fault, is Cyrilla Maude," said a young lady, who was sitting there, the late archdeacon's daughter. "A regular old maid, she is; goes about amongst the poor, and all that."

"And takes care of her sister's children, who won't take care of them for herself, and is all that is good and loving to everybody," spoke up Mary Wilkinson, angry at the disparagement of Cyrilla. "Do you remember Cyrilla Maude?" she added, turning to the Dean.

"Yes. Oh yes, I remember her," was the impassive answer, delivered in a most impassive tone.

"I observed a lady sitting in the pew with Lady Hume yesterday; perhaps that was Miss Maude?" remarked Lady Elizabeth. "A sweet-looking woman, with an expression of sadness in her face. One might fancy that some great care had passed over her, and left its traces there."

"That was Cyrilla Maude," cried the archdeacon's daughter. "As to care?—I don't know what care she can have; unless it is that she's not married."

"That she is not, is her own fault," said Mrs. Wilkinson. "She might have had young Leader. He is Sir Charles now. He asked her twice over and made no secret of it."

"She may marry yet," observed Lady Elizabeth.

"It is scarcely likely," returned the young lady. "Why, she must be two-or-three and thirty!—nobody would ask her."

"I add several years on to thirty, and sometimes I think my chance may not be gone yet," laughed Lady Elizabeth, good-humouredly. And the archdeacon's daughter blushed to her fingers' ends: she had made a mistake in her good manners.

The precincts were up in arms. The Dean of Oldchurch was about to hold an evening reception, and the cards for it had gone out but charily. Those who got them were wild with delight; those who did not get them were wild with anger. The forgotten ones, this time, would be remembered another—but that did not mollify present wounds.

Cards had come to Dr. Maude's. For Dr. Maude, for Lady Hume, and for Miss Maude. "Do you go, Cyrilla?" asked the Doctor with indifference.

"Yes, papa," was the quiet answer. "I *must* get over the first meeting with him," thought Cyrilla to herself. "As well do it now as later."

The evening came. Lady Hume was gorgeous in black velvet and pearls; Cyrilla simple in white crape—for they had gone into slight mourning; the Doctor wore silver buckles in his shoes and breeches, and was as polished as a Doctor of Divinity can be. The Dean came forward cordially.

Once more his pleasant tones sounded on Cyrilla's ear in friendly greeting; once more the tips of her white-gloved fingers were within his. What she answered, she never knew. Her very lips were white, her tongue was half paralysed; all she felt was, that she made herself a simpleton and that he must have seen she did. Taking refuge in the quietest corner to be found, she had a dreadful recollection of having called him "Mr. Hartley" and then mending it with "Mr. Dean."

"The Dean's young daughter was in the room; a fair child between

three and four years old. She released herself from a lady who was holding her prisoner, and ran up to Cyrylla.

"What is your name?" enquired Cyrylla.

"Charlotte. Where are the little girls?"

"Little girls?" repeated Cyrylla, not understanding.

"Those little girls that played with me in the Green Walk this afternoon. They played with me after you went into the house."

"Did they?" said Cyrylla. "They are in bed now. They will play with you another time."

"Papa said I ought to be in bed. But Aunt Elizabeth said I should come in first. She——"

"Are you making acquaintance with my little girl, Miss Maude?"

The speaker was the Dean. Cyrylla collected her senses, and answered as she might have answered any other dean.

"She is making acquaintance with me, rather, I think. It appears she recognised me as belonging to my little nieces, and came to inquire after them. I tell her they are in bed."

"Ah! like good children. You hear, Charlotte?"

Charlotte flew away. Possibly, lest the mandate should be issued for her.

"How very little Oldchurch is altered!" resumed the Dean.

"Not much, I believe."

"You have lost all your sisters, Miss Maude."

"Yes; they are all married. Some are in one place, some in another. One is in India. She went out with Lady Hume, and married there."

"Are they well at Berton Rectory?"

"Quite well, thank you. My uncle is getting feeble. He met with an accident; a bad fall; and has never been the same active man since."

"I shall go over and see them some day. Are you often there?"

"Very seldom now. I stay at home, now that papa is alone."

"And your brother Edmund?"

"He is quite well, thank you. He paid us a visit in the summer."

A few more sentences, in which he still called her Miss Maude, coldly polite as these were, and the Dean moved away. She did not come in contact with him again. "I am glad it is over," she thought, as she left the deanery. "It was only the first meeting I dreaded."

Twilight was on the earth the following evening; twilight, almost darkness, lay on the cloisters. Cyrylla Maude, who had gone in to sit with Mary Wilkinson for ten minutes, and had sat an hour and ten, came hastily out at Mr. Lane's cloister door, as being the nearest way home. She sped along the south side, and in turning the corner into the west, ran right against—the Dean.

"Oh, I—I—*beg* your pardon," panted Cyrylla, when the darkness

allowed her to discover who it was. And she would have darted as speedily away, but the Dean's hand was laid upon her. He had a right to know who had thus unceremoniously flown against him.

"Is it you, Cyrilla?"

"Indeed I beg your pardon, Dr. Hartley. I was running home from Mr. Lane's. I never heard your steps."

"There were no steps to hear," said the Dean. "In passing through the cloisters I had halted, and was looking over into the graveyard. Upon hearing your footsteps, I turned away, and you came against me."

"I am very sorry; indeed I am. Please to let me go, Dr. Hartley."

"Presently," he answered, retaining his hold. "Have you forgotten the evening when you and I stood here before? Ten years ago."

Had she forgotten it! She did not speak, but he might have heard her heart beat.

"Cyrilla, how is it to be? Shall the old feelings be renewed?—or are we to remain strangers, playing false before the world and with each other?"

She burst into a flood of distressing tears. "Oh! do not you mock me! I have suffered enough without that."

"What do you mean, Cyrilla? Mock *you*! You, who have lain enshrined in my heart all these years; though not awakened from it into life! And—unless I am entirely mistaken—as I have lain in yours."

She cried still; more softly. He drew her nearer to him with his all-protecting arm.

"Will you come home to me, and be my little girl's mother?"

"It could not be," she sobbed. "I am not fit now. What would the world say?"

"Say!—the world!" he uttered. "Not fit! Why are you not fit?"

"I am more than thirty years old, and my hair is going grey," she meekly answered. "It would say you should choose one younger and fairer."

"I am thirty-eight," laughed the Dean, "and my hair is greyer than yours. Oh Cyrilla! unselfish as ever! Do you know, my darling, that, were your hair white, and your years threescore, I would rather wed you, than all the younger and fairer ones in the world?"

She no longer essayed to draw away from him; she stole her hand into his, and laid her face upon his shoulder: and the Dean—Dean though he was—took from it what kisses he pleased.

"I must go now," she softly whispered. "I must indeed."

"When I choose to let you. You are a prisoner in my own domains, Miss Maude. The cloisters belong to me now, please to remember, and I shall not release you until I think fit. They were not mine, exactly, that other night."

"How did you get out, that night?"

"I did not get out. I remained in them until morning."

"Oh John!"

"I did. Ah, Cyrilla! I have undergone more for the love of you than you may think for. You ought to recompense me."

"How shall I be able to tell papa?" she whispered.

"Don't tell him," said the Dean, laughing; "leave it to me."

"Do you know, I cannot think of you as the Dean of O'dchurch," resumed Cyrilla, as they walked arm-in-arm towards Dr. Maude's door. "You have seemed to me, ever since you came, as the plain John Hartley of old. Except when I see you marching into the cathedral at the head of them all. And then I can scarcely believe it."

"I may be the Dean to the world: to you I am John Hartley. Cyrilla, cast your thoughts back to the night we parted. Where is the difference between the promise I wished you to give me, and the actual facts, as they have turned out? I asked you to let me win you when I became grand enough for Dr. Maude; and I have done so."

"A thousand times have I repented not giving you the promise," she impulsively rejoined, her eyelashes again becoming wet. "It seemed, in these later years, as though I had brought all my misery upon myself. I think it is that, John, which has silvered my hair."

He wrung her hand, saw her enter, and turned off to the deanery.

"I suppose you will not refuse Cyrilla to me now, Dr. Maude," cried the Dean, the following day—which was the way that he, without preparation or circumlocution, entered upon the matter. "She is willing to become my wife, subject to your approval."

Dr. Maude was taken utterly by surprise. Never for a moment had he believed the Dean would renew his attentions to Cyrilla. His face turned scarlet, and he bent nearly as low as the old bedesmen; muttering words of "the honour conferred upon his daughter by Mr. Dean."

Mr. Dean laughed outright—and could not help it. He was thinking of the strange changes that occur on the stage of life.

And Cyrilla, with a thankful, loving spirit, entered upon her new home under the sheltering care of one who would ever guide and love her. And the demoiselles of the precincts—not one of whom but had cast a hope on her own account, to the new and attractive Dean—did wonder greatly at the change apparent in her. For, if Cyrilla Maude had looked worn and sad enough for an old maid, Cyrilla Hartley looked blooming and young, as though no wife had ever been so happy.

Perhaps few had. Cyrilla would tell you so.



OUT AT SEA.

FAR on the deep mid-ocean tossed,
 Leagues away from the friendly shore,
 In the watery wilderness lost,
 Driven and deafened by rush and roar,
 Baffled by wind and wave are we ;—
 What sweet home-spirits may there be
 Sadly pondering on our wandering
 Wide and wearisome out at sea ?

Lying here in my tossing bed,
 I dream of ruin, and rock, and wreck—
 Hearing the slow, continuous tread
 Of the sailor who walks the deck,
 Keeping his long watch patiently.
 Gentler watchers on shore there be ;
 Eyes which weep for us, leaving sleep for us,
 Fond watch keep for us out at sea !

In at the narrow window there
 Drifts the ocean-wind, wild and damp,
 Frightening into flicker and flare
 The feeble flame of the swinging lamp.
 Yet, though lonesome and dark it be,
 There are places where steadily
 Faith's fires burn for us, true hearts mourn for us,
 Dear arms yearn for us out at sea !

Blinded and beaten by wind and foam,
 Hurlled and tossed at the sea's command,
 Sweet the thought that in some dear home,
 Steady and still on the solid land,
 Where our hopes and our memories be
 Safely harboured from storm and sea,—
 Love takes heed for us—love's lips plead for us—
 Love's prayers speed for us out at sea !

Night and darkness, and storm and clouds ;
 Creak of cordage and shudder of sails ;
 Drifting drearily through the shrouds
 There is a murmur of mournful wails—
 Dirges sung for the lost at sea,
 Where the tempest is fierce and free ;—
 Father, hear to us—bend Thine ear to us—
 Be Thou near to us out at sea !

Ship "Mercury," at sea, Nov., 18—.

